

AUTUMN, 1956

# RELIGION IN LIFE

*A Christian Quarterly*  
OF OPINION AND DISCUSSION

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A CHRISTIAN QUARTERLY of opinion and discussion

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VOL. XXV

Autumn, 1956

No. 4

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## *An Announcement*

OUR EDITOR-IN-CHIEF, Dr. Nolan B. Harmon, was elected a Bishop of The Methodist Church on July 12, 1956, and was assigned to the area of North and South Carolina. He is now resident in Charlotte, North Carolina. His duties as Book Editor of The Methodist Church, Editor of Abingdon Press, and Editor of RELIGION IN LIFE will be taken over by a successor some time this Autumn.

Dr. Harmon became Editor of RELIGION IN LIFE in 1941, at the retirement of the first Editor, Dr. John W. Langdale, on occasion of the reunion of three Methodist groups to form The Methodist Church. A member of the Virginia Conference, he has proved to be an active spiritual link between the formerly sundered Southern and Northern branches of his denomination. With his extensive activities and writing in behalf of his own communion he has combined a lively ecumenical interest, being a member of the Methodist Commission on Church Union and of the Executive Committee of the National Council of Churches. He has particularly enjoyed the responsibility for RELIGION IN LIFE, with its interdenominational outreach.

With the present issue, Bishop Harmon has seen the Quarterly through its twenty-fifth year. We want to express our gratitude for his broad vision and solid achievement, and wish him all success and happiness in his new calling. We who have worked with him have enjoyed the warmth of his personality, his happy sense of humor, and the depth of his spirit. We look forward to his continued help and counsel as far as his time allows.

THE EDITORIAL BOARD

# Non-Christian Religions in the Contemporary World

## I. Islam

KENNETH CRAGG

AMONG THE NINETY-NINE NAMES OF GOD familiar to the Muslim from the Qur'ān and the Tradition is one that occurs only once in the sacred volume but which has peculiar significance. Surah 112, the famous Surah of the Unity, reads in its first two verses: "Say, He is God alone, God the *Samad*." "Eternal" is the usual rendering. But this centers on a meaning which is derivative rather than original. For *Al-Samad* suggests the Being to whom one repairs or betakes himself, in exigencies, because all affairs are stayed upon him. The word has a synonym which means "much resorted unto." Because nothing is independent of God, he is the *Samad*. Hence the sense of his eternity, with the force, it would seem, of inalienable indispensability.

We begin with this descriptive of God in Islam not with the intention of pursuing further the fascinations of classical Islamic theology, but simply with a view to finding a suggestive clue to the exposition of contemporary Islam. For, in so formidable an enterprise, it is well to have some principle of discipline supplied by the theme itself. The pitfalls of contemporary study are notorious. There is not only the difficulty of adequate perspective in an entity both vast and changing; there is also the difficulty of appropriate objectivity. Too much current Islamic study is unduly preoccupied with interests which, while they may be sound in provoking the concern to know, are liable to vitiate its pursuit. The chairman of a recent highly competent discussion of Islam, in an introductory review of its proceedings, remarks:

We are led, then, if we are concerned at all with the defense of Suez, the relations between Israel and her neighbors, Moroccan autonomy, the independence of Persia or of Pakistan, and the resistance of all these regions to external and internal

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Communist danger, to wonder what in our day can still be involved in the fact of being Muslim.<sup>1</sup>

The goal here is excellent, but the incentives are dubious. For only as we transcend evaluations of other faiths in terms that have to do with our security or our Western survival, shall we truly be in a position to know what they involve for their adherents. The inwardness of the thing must always be our concern. It is what Islam means today for the Muslim, rather than what his attitudes may mean for us, that should be our aim to discover. We seek to penetrate, in its modern self-expression, that great system of relatedness to God, that recourse, so to speak, to *Al-Samad*, which Islam is.

When we turn to it, however, we find at once that same preoccupation, from the Asian or Muslim side, with the political, which we have begun by deploring in the Western approach to Islamics. As the most obvious feature in today's Islam, it is an index to much else. Almost the entire Muslim world has come into political independence in the last three or so decades, and much of it in the last single decade. There are the old and new nation-states of the Arab East. There are Pakistan and Indonesia, together drawing the population center of gravity of world Islam well east of Karachi and away from its ancestral lands. The Sudan and Nigeria in Africa, with Tunisia and Morocco, are entering new chapters in their history with the West in political recession. The same is true of the Gold Coast and other smaller territories. Millions of Muslim humanity have passed out of political tutelage into self-responsibility.

When seen from within, this fact means a recovery of a veritably Islamic form of relationship to God. For an Islam under non-Muslim rule is in a real sense a contradiction in terms. Religion and rule were as inseparable in classical Muslim history as Prophet and leader were inseparable in the personal role of Muḥammad. When, in the eighteenth century, great Muslim peoples in India and elsewhere began to fall under Western (Christian) dominance, Muslim history entered into a strange aberration, in which its destiny to rule seemed oddly suspended—presumably by act of God himself. It became an urgent dilemma for the thinking Muslim, for example, whether to identify British rule in India as *Dār al-Islām* (since Muslims had their free exercise of faith there) or *Dār al-Harb* (since the authority was non-Muslim). The problem was only intensified when the political intrusion brought with it a whole host of

<sup>1</sup> von Grunebaum, G. E., Ed., *Unity and Variety in Muslim Civilization*, Chicago, 1955, p. 3

disturbing forces. The question whether to be hospitable or not to be hospitable became the searching test of Muslim integrity.

But at least on its political side the dilemma is now largely resolved. Muslim affairs are back in Muslim hands. The strange discrepancy is over, and the community of the faith is once more the arbiter of the destiny of the faith. It is this sense of a recovery of the valid order of things, as well as the familiar patterns of nationalism, which lies behind the current re-possession of Islam by Islam. Yet the new day, having recovered an ancient quality, finds itself faced on all hands with factors and forces of change. In resuming again the responsibility for its own external affairs, Islam is subject to strong internal stresses. It aspires to demonstrate its adequacy for the demands of the twentieth century. Its constitution-makers have been busy in Pakistan, in Indonesia and elsewhere, debating and enforcing its ideological norms. In Egypt particularly, but also elsewhere in the Arab lands, it has been experimenting with alternatives to the over-sanguine political systems of the nineteen-twenties, which, though democratic in form, too often played in fact into the hands of oligarchy and corruption.

This continuing search for the practically valid forms of Islamic government and the internal debate it arouses is one of the most crucial issues within Islam today. When Pakistan was created in the name of Islamic distinctiveness and for the perpetuation of a valid Islamic culture, diverse understandings of the nature of both came together under the inspired, but not too definite, leadership of Muḥammad 'Alī Jinnah. There was a natural concentration on the achieving of nationhood. The definition of its true criteria could be deferred. It is just this postponed travail over the meaning of Islamic statehood that so prolonged the process of the making of Pakistan's constitution.

The debate is paralleled elsewhere, though nowhere quite so sharply, since nowhere else did Islam become so insistently and so disruptively the occasion of territorial partition. Pakistan thus remains the most striking piece of acted "apology" in twentieth-century Islam, an index indeed to its sense of otherness and of self-sufficiency. Almost everywhere, it is true, this debate as to the shape of a true Islamic society goes in favor of the practical and moderate men. In Pakistan the movement of Abū-l-'Alā Maudūdī and of others, seeking a rigid, conservative definition of Islamicity, has made some eruptions<sup>2</sup> but little headway. Likewise in Egypt, the Muslim Brotherhood, in the nineteen-thirties and early forties a serious

<sup>2</sup> See the very illuminating judicial *Report of the Court of Enquiry into the Punjab Disturbances*, March, 1953.

aspirant to political effectiveness, seems broken by a regime that has taken over some of its economic ideals without its sharpness of Islamic definition.

This fact of the dominance of the attitudes conservatives deplore should not, however, blind us to the importance of the latter even in semi-frustration. For the end is not yet. Nor should we be tempted, as some Western observers are, to suppose that the present leadership of most political Islam is somehow not deeply Islamic, because it has many of the political accents of the West. It is true that many such leaders, as did Liaquat 'Ali Khān in the speeches gathered into *Pakistan; the Heart of Asia*,<sup>3</sup> have given versions of Islam that make it identical with much general ideology and correspondingly capable of dispensing with much of its characteristic dogma and practice. None the less, it will be found on further examination that the history is not as dispensable as it seemed. There has been not a little in Islam this last quarter-century—not least in Turkey—which looks at first like a repudiation of the Islam the textbooks know, but which proves on longer scrutiny to be rather an experimentation in recognizably continuous Islamicity.

But such claims, and the right to experimentation that makes them, are regarded by other elements with equal assurance as unwarrantable compromises of Islam. Thus the gist of the present political situation in the Muslim world requires that we go further into an assessment of Islamic self-definition in this century. For that is the heart of the story. The pre-occupation with politics does not always conduce to the best discharge of the intellectual duties it imposes. But fundamentally the theme of contemporary Islam is this determination of a valid *Islam* by Muslims in the circumstances of a changed world. There is no need here to recite the manifold items of change. The important thing is the pattern of proper continuity. Since God is *Al-Samad*, Lord of man's relatedness in submission to his arbitrament and his will in the life of the person and society, the ultimate question is the meaning and obedience of these attitudes in today's world.

There is, perhaps naturally (as part of the whole issue), no clear agreement as to who, among Muslims, is appropriately competent to determine the answers. The conservative mind in all cultures lays great stress on the qualified custodianship of religious authority. While there is no priesthood in Islam, there is a long tradition of shaikh-hood, the status of the '*Ulamā*', who alone enjoy the professional skills of Arabic grammar, exegetical techniques, and the hardly-earned familiarity with the minutiae of Quranic

<sup>3</sup> New York, 1953; being speeches delivered in the United States and Canada.

scholarship and legal lore. While every Muslim spreading his prayer-mat where he wills has uninhibited access in *Salāt* to God, only the qualified few can pretend to the training which a classical orthodoxy, legal or theological, requires of its officers.

Yet—and here is one of the main difficulties—such education in the conservative custodianship of the traditional faith can usually only be had in isolation from the broad currents of contemporary life. There has been throughout this century a deep dichotomy in Islamic education, hard to bridge and painful to endure, between the increasing state education in the Western style and the continuing patterns of mosque-school traditions on the other. The graduates of Al-Azhar in Cairo, the Zaitounah in Tunis, of Qairawiyyah in Morocco, or of Deoband in India, have tended to find their skills less venerated, less serviceable, less remunerative, than did their fathers. It is the technicians and scientists, the engineers, chemists and physicists, whom the modern world awaits more readily from its schools. Pressures of secularism tend to disenchant the world of pundits. The public stock of the '*Ulamā*' faces a sharp competition, if not a sad neglect.

There is not time to pursue this theme in its personal implications, important as these are for those who have devoted their youth and pains to skills they find devalued in their hands. It is this which explains some of the bewilderment of the conservative mind. But there are other positive factors making for wider claims about fitness to adjudicate on the Muslim and Islam.

The ancient principles of *Ijmā'* and *Ijtihād* in Islam are linked, in a general way, with democratic notions, to assert that the community is the ultimate court of appeal. *Ijmā'* meant, classically, a "*consensus fidelium*," initiated by *Ijtihād*, or "enterprise"—but both highly circumscribed by conditions and applicable only to matters left undetermined by prior sources of guidance in the Qur'ān, the Tradition and *Qiyās*.

The door, as the phrase goes, of *Ijtihād* may be more or less open, according to the attitudes one wishes to invoke. But the battle is on to use it increasingly as a means of validating, in the name of the community, new meanings and departures in a growing Islam. While, essentially, *Ijmā'* is very far from any counting of heads or referendum, the idea within it tends to be invoked for the thesis that the finally determinative factor in Islam is the *consensus* of Muslims. Islam is what Muslims say it is. And the Muslim, for such purposes, shall be defined roughly as he who thinks himself to be one. Though there is some circularity in this position, and risk enough for the conservative to spurn it, the attitude seems likely to



develop increasingly, given the growth of mass media of expression and reaction, and the approximate precedent of a long-standing principle.

Important as it is to identify our court of appeal, or rather, to understand the tensions about where it lies, the question is in a sense only procedural. Where does the mind of Islam, whether "clerical" or "lay," professional or popular, go, for the patterns of its obedience to God the *Samad*? The answer here, with apologies to the purists, may concentrate on the Qur'ān, the Prophet, the *Sharī'ah* (the Law), and the history. These four realms must suffice, in these few pages of contemporary analysis.

#### THE QUR'ĀN AND MUHAMMAD

To some degree the question we are exploring as to how today's Muslim understands his Islam resolves itself into how he "receives" his Qur'ān. For the Book of God is the supreme document of the faith. Though amplified by other sources, it is never to be contradicted or displaced. In the historic view of revelation it is the Divine speech communicated from Heaven to the Prophet and recorded from his utterance to be recited and read by generations of the faithful as the *ipsissimum verbum* of God.

Perhaps the most conspicuous tendency in recent Muslim thought about the Qur'ān is the one that inclines to view it in terms of the conscious authorship of Muḥammad. It happens more by inference than by design. The late Amīr 'Alī, author of the oft-reprinted *Spirit of Islam*, refers there repeatedly to decisions or institutions of Quranic origin as arising from the sagacity or foresight of the Prophet himself. The change of the *Qiblah* (direction of prayer) from Jerusalem to Mecca, or the ordaining of the Ramaḍān fast, are explained as vindicating the wisdom or judgment of Muḥammad. There is no explicit repudiation of the traditional view that holds Muḥammad to be no more than the penman of the Divine speech, and it may be that the incompatibility of the two views is instinctively ignored. None the less the tendency here seems quite marked to take the Qur'ān much more in its personal setting of time and place, without at the same time raising the deep theological issues that belong inseparably to the concept of an oracular revelation such as the Qur'ān is.<sup>4</sup>

Another notable feature of thought on the Qur'ān is that exemplified by Iqbāl and his disciples in Indian Islam. It is the habit of finding significances from modern philosophy in the terms of the Meccan Arabic and

<sup>4</sup> It may be permitted, for economy of space, to refer here to an article on this theme in *The Muslim World*, Vol. xlv.1, Jan. 1956, pp. 61-68.



the Judeo-Christian-Arabian vocabulary of Muḥammad's context. Thus the name *Rabb*, or "Lord," is made to carry implications from Bergsonian doctrine on creative evolution; and notions of McTaggart's metaphysics, on which Iqbāl was reared in Cambridge, are seen in the descriptives of natural phenomena in the Prophet's early preaching.

To criticize this habit is not to suggest that Quranic scholarship had no need of liberation from timidity and conformity. Indeed, the emancipation of Muslim scholarship from such *Taqlīd*, which was the great achievement of Muḥammad 'Abduh, was urgently needed and energetically championed. What is meant is that the first duty of exegesis should be an attention to the sense of the text for its own contemporaries. All debate should surely begin with the significance of the Qur'ān to its seventh-century recipients, and current understanding be held to a primary loyalty to, or compatibility with, historical meanings. This is not to deny initiative, but rather to obviate interpretative "violence."

Perhaps in measure, however, the process is irresistible, since it is the most readily open procedure for bringing a Quranic loyalty into line with new thought. The same has occurred in the legal exegesis of some passages, where there has been a complete reversal of a long belief about the import of a text in the discovery of a new force. It is perhaps wiser to invalidate by implication whole generations of fidelity, than to join the explosive issues latent in the sharp juxtaposition of old precepts and new attitudes.<sup>5</sup>

Of direct textual scholarship, in the sense in which Western theology understands it, there has been surprisingly little on the part of Muslim Quranic scholars, though it must be noted that many of the issues of biblical scholarship (arising from the long range of the Bible's own history) do not obtain vis-à-vis a Qur'ān which was the product of a single prophethood extending over little more than two decades. Nevertheless, there are numerous and intriguing issues for a future Quranic scholarship. The vocabulary can be a point of departure into a study of the human sources of Muḥammad's ministry. This in turn could arouse a deep study of the relation of truth to term and meaning to language—a realm to which the Muslim mind has been somewhat averse—witness its resistance to translation of the Qur'ān into any language from the Arabic, a resistance only lately overcome, and that in part because non-Muslim translations forced

<sup>5</sup> Thus the injunction in Surah iv.3 about marriage with up to two, three or four women, was held for long centuries as permissive authorization of plural marriage up to the limit of four. Now, the clause about equal treatment of wives within such marriage—interpreted as referring not to financial provision but to emotional regard—is widely seen as a virtual prohibition, and the Qur'ān is understood as enforcing monogamy.

the issue. Such has been the strength of the view that the Qur'ān, as revelation, is both form and content, and since translation destroys the first it only gives half the whole.<sup>6</sup>

For the most part, however, such "critical" exegetical study has been avoided. There have been a few efforts to "explain the Qur'ān by the Qur'ān," as Muḥammad Abū Zaid phrased it in 1930; using, for example, the Qur'ān's insistence on order in nature to reinterpret the supernatural, where that order is seemingly disturbed. There has been also one interesting attempt to study the divergences of patriarchal narratives in the biblical and Quranic versions, using the hypothesis, not of circumstances in the human authorship, nor of Divine correction of biblical corruption, but of conscious literary artistry on the part of Muḥammad. This view, which sees the Prophet as manipulating his literary sources in the interests both of artistic and didactic effect, was developed in a doctoral thesis in Egypt in 1948, but had to be modified under strong Azhar protest. By and large, the tendency in Muslim scholarship is to let sharp issues lie and to beware of venturesomeness or inventiveness in exegesis. The experiences of Dr. Taha Husain in 1926-28, in issues having to do only indirectly with Quranic orthodoxy, seem to have confirmed an instinct to leave problems of historicity and criticism in abeyance.<sup>7</sup>

But perhaps this situation is less important than Western parallels might suggest. The Qur'ān continues to be the *vade mecum* of the Muslim soul, and its total impact is hardly lessened for what some outsiders might blame as inattention to its intellectual corollaries. On the negative side much has been done by and since 'Abduh, in movements like the *Salafiyyah*, to disencumber Islam of excessive deference to traditionalism. For the rest, it may be remarked that theological pursuits are, for reasons already hinted, very differently conceived and equipped from their counterparts in the Western world of scholarship.

An assessment of the trends of twentieth-century biography of the Prophet of Islam could well occupy several dissertations instead of these few paragraphs. There have probably been more biographers in the last three decades than in the same number of previous centuries. Interest in the great human Founder of Islam, as part of the pursuit of obedience to *Al-Samad*, is deep and active. There has been a spate of presentations, embodying in biographical form the ideological self-definition of Islam

<sup>6</sup> Witness the title of M. Pickthall's version, London, 1930: "*The Meaning of the Glorious Koran*," intentionally chosen to preclude the notion than an English rendering is "The Quran."

<sup>7</sup> This *cause célèbre* had to do with pre-Islamic poetry and the historical role of Abraham at Mecca. See *Fi-l-Shi'r al-Jāhili*, Cairo, 1926.

today. This instinct is traditional. From the beginning the human figure of the Prophet has been to the devout the index to the mind of God, corroborative of and complementary to the Qur'ān. The behavior and *obiter dicta* of the Prophet, meticulously stored and hallowed in Tradition (*Hadīth*), became the clue to the Divine intention. No other figure in history has so extensive a posthumous impact upon his community. It is natural for the Muslim mind striving now after continuity through change, to seek anew in the great exemplar the shape of its true loyalty.

But the process is in a sense reciprocal. The communal mind that seeks to know itself in the historical image of the Prophet tends also to draw the image after its own ideological likeness. The important thing, however, is the biographical "anchor" of the current idealism. Muḥammad is understood in some circles as a profound social revolutionary, the inaugurator of the Welfare State, the anticipator of Marx without his errors, the universal exemplar for all time. There has been, it is true, a certain diminution of the mystical, metaphysical exaltation of the Prophet, for the reason that this was mainly the instinct of the Sufi, or dervish, orders and these have come under a ban in some places (especially Turkey), and elsewhere were disapproved by reforming movements such as 'Abduh's and Iqbāl's, which regretted their excesses. But if the language of prayer manuals, that gave to Muḥammad an almost superhuman eminence in pious devotion, is less favored, he still remains the archetype of the ongoing Muslim ideal, the focus of decision in the concepts of Islamicity.

#### THE SHARĪAH AND HISTORY

These two, like the Qur'ān and Muḥammad, may be linked together here. By the *Sharī'ah* is meant the sacred Law which Muslim jurisprudence applies, the Law which derives from the documents of faith and practice. It includes the pillars of religion and the wide ramifications of Muslim legal order as defined by the great Schools of Law. It is in the realm of the *Sharī'ah* that the most obvious changes in historic Islam have occurred in this century. The origins of these changes go further into the Ottoman past, where we cannot now trace them. In the early nineteen-twenties, Turkey abolished the *Sharī'ah* and blatantly—as it then seemed—adopted civil and criminal codes of European origin. Since then, most Muslim states have, in large degree, followed suit. The law of personal status, having to do with marriage, wardship, divorce and inheritance, is the last area to yield to change. But even here, there have been in most states, saving Saudi Arabia, extensive modifications of procedure and precept.

In many quarters these changes are justified as fulfilling in a new day an essential loyalty to the *Shari'ah*, which is thus understood, not as a literal taskmaster, but as a witness to the sovereignty of the Divine claim. The distinction is made between spirit and letter. Since the second is the servant of the first, it is a false inversion of loyalty to make the letter supreme. While the conservative mind struggles for a total re-assertion of an untempered *Shari'ah*, the appeal to the spirit largely prevails. For it has the supreme merit of realism. Since some of the provisions of the *Shari'ah* are beyond physical fulfillment in the modern context, at least a partial spiritualizing seems inevitable. Once the principle is admitted, it is hard to forestall its progress on any logical ground.

The issue was sharply illustrated in the now celebrated controversy over the Turkish termination of the Caliphate in 1924—an institution on which, traditionally, the very *Shari'ah* depended for its external life. It may not, then, have been as clear as it has since become, that the new nationalism had outmoded it. Its disappearance is the most significant single item of Islamic transformation. But in the immediate sequel to 1924, 'Ali 'Abd al Rāziq found widespread resistance to his plea that the Caliphate had never been validly *de fide* for Islam, that God gave men the essentials of his will and left them creatively free to work out the by-laws—among which he numbered the Caliphal order—and that Muḥammad himself had willed no succession save that of spiritual discipleship. Arguments which then seemed a *tour de force* have, in the two decades since, won almost unanimous actual, if not theoretical, assent.

Within the *Shari'ah* are the twin concepts of *Zakāt* and *Falāḥ*. The one has to do with the responsibility that property imposes on possession; the other provides an ideological focus for the concept of social good. Both have played, and are doubtless destined to play, an increasing role in the evolution of Islamic society, with the sense of the public stake in the private good, and of the public good in the private duty. Their potential significance, arising as they do from within the integral origins of Islam, is endless. A great deal of current Muslim economic thought and planning takes its cue from these two concepts. In no other field does the *Shari'ah* of Islam afford more fertile ground for creative continuity. Reinforced by the exemplariness of the Prophet, *Zakāt* and *Falāḥ* will long be the matrix of fruitful Muslim change in response to the demands of new times.<sup>8</sup>

So it is that Islam today is engaged in an inclusive self-expression,

<sup>8</sup> The writer has tried to do better justice to these in *The Call of the Minaret*, Oxford University Press, 1956, Chap. 5.

both demanded and occasioned by new political self-responsibility, in which the present searches, tests and renews the past. For only religions with a sense of the past can enjoy a real sense of a future. Islam today has both, and it lives in their interaction, through contrasted championing of what they contain and under the pressures of new circumstances that the present brings. If these assessments seem sketchy, we fall back upon Shakespeare's query: "Can this cockpit hold the vasty fields of France?" Brief pages can do little with teeming multitudes and vast themes. But our supreme duty, as bearers of Christ, is a patient, objective and sympathetic understanding of the aspirations and tensions of contemporary Islam. For out of these a ministry of Christian relatedness under God must be fashioned and pursued.

Among the duties of such a ministry will be the interpretation of the Christian understanding of man. For the very aspiration of Islam today after newness of society raises the question of men's remaking. It is surely a significant coincidence that the Arabic name for the new régime in Egypt—daily current in the Cairo press—is the same as "the New Testament,"—*Al-'Ahd al-Jadid*. We must strive to bear witness to all who seek after newness of society, to the Christian criteria and promise of newness of life.

Then there are the deep meanings of the Christian understanding of God, the faith in Trinity as an apprehension of unity and all that follows when we seriously take Christ as the clue to God. These themes of theology have been productive in the past of much barren controversy that has too often located the issues, as it were, propositionally rather than existentially. The redeeming action of God in Christ must be patiently related to that sense of the Divine Lordship which Islam already confesses. The aim of our Christian ministry by pen and deed, by word and life, is to interpret to thinking Muslims the import of Christ's own words: "Ye believe in God: believe also in Me."

It is in this context that we must take upon ourselves the burden of the Muslim disallowance of the Cross: not with the kind of militancy that is discordant with the Cross, but with a warm and wistful sense of its centrality both to our sinful human predicament and to the mercy that is properly Divine. The story of the New Testament demands a trusteeship conformed to its contents. "God is most great," cries the Muslim confession. Is it not in Christ and the word of the Cross that we discover wherein his greatness consists?

# Hinduism

DAVID G. MOSES

## I

WHAT IS HINDUISM, what are its basic conceptions, what is it definitely in terms of creed, cult or culture? These are questions that defy accurate answer. There is an all-inclusiveness in Hinduism that does not admit of pin-pointing, and there is a variety that militates against reduction to a greatest common denominator. We are faced with innumerable forms of worship and observances, crude and refined, sacrificial and non-sacrificial, moral and immoral.

The Hindu view of life is the result of the forces of various ages, with the diverse races and the various economic milieus interacting among each other.<sup>1</sup> It is open to question whether there was a real fusion of ideas and synthesis of practices, or whether we can correctly speak of an evolution of Hinduism. Evolution implies a line, a succession of changes, each conserving what is of moment in the previous change and adding its own new element to the old. The history of Hinduism shows no radical changes, for it is the most tolerant of religions: there have been no disgraceful religious wars in India. As Professor Radhakrishnan puts it, "Hinduism is wholly free from the strange obsession of the Semitic faiths that the acceptance of a particular religious metaphysic is necessary for salvation, and non-acceptance thereof is a heinous sin meriting eternal punishment in hell."<sup>2</sup> Therefore it has allowed and preserved all kinds of beliefs, every variety of religious practices, and all ideas of God.

Hindu thinkers have tried to resolve this chaos. Attempts have been made to indicate the unity in the midst of this diversity.<sup>3</sup> But in all its long history Hinduism has never said "no" to any system of ideas, or any understanding of God.

<sup>1</sup> Chatterji, S. K., "Dynamic Hinduism and Radhakrishnan," in Schilpp, P. A., ed., *The Philosophy of S. Radhakrishnan*, Tudor Publishing Company, 1952.

<sup>2</sup> Radhakrishnan, S., *The Hindu View of Life*, The Macmillan Company, 1928, p. 37.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Radhakrishnan, S., *op. cit.*, pp. 23-25, 31-33, 48-49. Sarma, D. S., *A Primer of Hinduism*, p. 25.

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It is this all-inclusiveness of Hinduism, the implied principle of definition by denotation, the absence of a definite creedal basis, that has reduced to ineffectiveness much of the valid criticisms of Hinduism by Christian missionaries. All these efforts were based on the assumption that there is one definable entity called Hinduism, with ordered contours and a limited number of essential characteristics. Therefore when the learned critic had demolished one intellectual position, or one particular doctrinal formulation, or even one set of practices, identifying it with Hinduism, the frustrating rejoinder was ready at hand. The Hindu replied with undisturbed calm, that that is not Hinduism.

Another fact of importance that has been ignored by Christian apologetics is the historical and the present fact that Hinduism is not something static, once for all made, but a living, dynamic religion. It has from its very beginnings tried to adjust itself to new conditions, to new races and people with different gods and different rites. It has grown by a process of assimilation of ideas and juxtaposition of existences. In the last 150 years, beginning with Raja Ram Mohun Roy, Hinduism has shown such unprecedented vitality as to produce a renaissance of this ancient religion.

Apart from the inherent vitality of Hinduism, what are the forces that have operated to produce this renaissance of Hinduism and the many reconceptions of fundamental doctrines? In the main they have been two: the influence of Western culture and the growth of Christianity in India. Western culture came with the British penetration of India which was consolidated in the year 1858, when the previous administration of India by the East India Company passed into the hands of the British crown and the Parliament. The British very soon introduced the English system of education, which included Western natural and social sciences, English language and literature and history. It was in the year 1832 that what is called the Macaulay minute on an English system of education was passed, and it opened the whole wealth of Western inductive science and knowledge of Western political institutions to the wondering gaze and the avid hunger of the Indian student.

Hinduism at this time was at a very low ebb, mainly of the Puranic type, and it was full of gross superstitions and inhuman social practices. Diseases were ascribed to the anger of gods and goddesses, poverty and position in life were regarded as the result of past Karma, and all inhuman practices were somehow referred to religious sanctions. The acids of modernity had a tremendous amount of rusty metal to corrode and rubbish

to burn, and they did it wonderfully. Even though the knowledge of the nature, methods and achievements of science was confined only to a small minority (even today nearly 80 per cent of India is illiterate), it soon worked like a ferment and kindled the more thoughtful and religious among them to become the standard-bearers of a social revolution.

The second major force in the renaissance of modern Hinduism was the entrance of Christianity into India through the Protestant Missions. While the former was a secular and religiously neutral force, the latter was a definitely religious force. It was a new religion and, in trying to win adherents, it engaged in a frontal attack on Hinduism, laying bare the social iniquities as directly stemming from its wrong conceptions of God and its relation to men. It preached the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. It fell foul of the caste system and the oppression of the outcaste. It condemned child marriage, enforced widowhood, *Sati* (burning of widows), infanticide, and the *devadasi* system (temple dancing girls), as devilish customs stemming from wrong religious and social conceptions.

The immediate effect of the operation of these two forces, one indirect and the other direct, was to inspire reform movements in Hinduism and the setting in motion of much-needed social reforms. As D. S. Sarma points out, though he is inclined to disregard the coming of Christianity as having much to do with the social reforms:

In the light of this new knowledge [that which was brought by Western Science] many an evil custom in Hindu society hitherto regarded as a decree of God appeared in its true colors as the folly of man. *Sati*, infanticide, enforced widowhood, child marriages, untouchability, *purdah*, *devadasi*, the caste system and prohibition of foreign travel began to lose their tyrannical hold on the minds of Hindus. And reformers arose who were determined to purge the society of these evils.<sup>4</sup>

## II

The first great reform movement in Hinduism was inaugurated by Ram Mohun Roy (1772-1833), and continued and established by Devendranath Tagore and Keshub Chander Sen. This is known as the *Brahmo Samaj*. Raja Ram Mohun Roy himself was more of a social reformer than a religious reformer, though he seems to have recognized the intimate relation between religious beliefs and social practices. In one of his letters he writes:

I regret to say that the present system of religion adhered to by the Hindus is not well calculated to promote their political interest. The distinction of castes,

<sup>4</sup> Sarma, D. S., *Studies in the Renaissance of Hinduism*, India: Benares Hindu University, 1944, 1949, p. 68.



introducing innumerable divisions and sub-divisions among them, has entirely deprived them of patriotic feeling, and the multitude of religious rites and ceremonies and the laws of purification have totally disqualified them from undertaking any difficult enterprise. It is, I think, necessary that some change should take place in their religion at least for the sake of their political advantage and social comfort.<sup>5</sup>

Brahmo Samaj stood for a new theism; it rejected the authority of the Vedas and Upanishads and other sacred writings and regarded reason and conscience as supreme authority; it advocated a reformed worship; no idol worship, no priestcraft, no temples, and congregational rather than individual worship in which prayer was given the primary place. It stood out against caste, child marriage, enforced widowhood and untouchability.

Brahmo Samaj was a daring attempt so to reconceive Hinduism as to make it opposed to the social evils that were current in that day and to make it a basis for the new order that was intended to be established. In this attempt it abjured Vedantism and formulated a kind of theism. Theism was not foreign to Hinduism: elements of it are to be found even in the Upanishads. But the theism which Brahmo Samaj preached was different from the older theism of the Vaishnava, Saiva and Sakta sects in many important respects. (1) It repudiated the authority of the Vedas and Upanishads. (2) It did not accept the doctrine of Avatars (divine incarnations). (3) It denounced in unqualified terms the popular worship of many gods and idolatry. (4) It denounced caste distinctions. (5) It made faith in the doctrines of Karma and Rebirth optional.

While the Brahmo Samaj contained many purifying elements in its faith and served as the vanguard of social progress, it could not influence Hinduism in a permanent way because it repudiated the authority of the Vedas and cut itself adrift from the main current. It must also be remembered that every one of the social evils that Brahmo Samaj attacked so relentlessly was inextricably connected with vested interest, and they were not to be dislodged by a mere redefinition of the nature of Hinduism.

The result was that India went ahead with the abolition of the social evils, recognized the new theistic emphases of Brahmo Samaj as already contained in its long tradition, and did not feel the necessity for a radical revision of its faith. As it has always happened in Hinduism, Brahmo Samaj became one variant of Hinduism and had its own adherents. There was an exclusiveness and a denial in it which was contrary to the Indian tradition, and it was doomed to dwindle into insignificance.

<sup>5</sup> Quoted in D. S. Sarma, *Ibid.*, p. 94, from Chatterji, R., *Ram Mohun Roy and Modern India*.

## III

The real reconception of Hinduism in a dynamic way is to be found in the *Ramakrishna movement*, which was started and developed by Swami Vivekananda (1863-1902) but inspired by Ramakrishna Paramahansa (1836-1886). Ramakrishna was more a religious seer, a yogi, than a religious philosopher. His great service to the modern renaissance of Hinduism is in the fact that he exhibited in his own religious experience that Vedanta is the ultimate truth of all religions. It was Vedanta that was under fire; it was Vedanta that was regarded as the ultimate source of all the social and religious evils of the day by the reformists of the Brahmo Samaj and *Prarthana Samaj*. Therefore Ramakrishna's service to the revival of Vedanta cannot be overestimated. He had mystical experiences of the different incarnations of God, beginning with Kali and passing beyond Hinduism to include Jesus and Muhammad. As he himself says:

I had to practice all the religions once, Hinduism, Islam and Christianity, and I have walked in the paths of the different denominations of Hinduism again—of Sakta, Vaishnava and Vedanta and other sects. And I have found that it is the same God towards whom all are traveling, only they are coming through diverse ways.<sup>a</sup>

Thus in his own person he stood as the concrete realization of ancient Hinduism, "the embodiment of all the past religious thought of India." He was a living testimony to the eternal truths of Hinduism.

The truths that he taught us are summarized as follows by D. S. Sarma. (1) Realization is the essence of religion. (2) To a man who has realized, all religions are paths that lead to the same goal. (3) Though both *jnana* and *bhakti* lead to the same goal, *bhakti* is to be preferred, especially in this "iron age." The former, namely, the path of knowledge, is difficult because one has to acquire a high degree of purity and self-control before one can tread that path; whereas the latter, namely, the path of devotion, is easy because purity and self-control will come of their own accord when once a man begins to love God. (4) Love of God should take precedence not only of knowledge, but also of good works. Social service is, no doubt, necessary and good, but it should be a part of divine service. (5) He warned against some of the immature teachings of those who have not yet found God. He disapproved of those who say this world is a dark, miserable place and those who constantly harp on the idea that we are weak, miserable sinners. (6) While he did not advocate image

<sup>a</sup> Quoted by D. S. Sarma, *Ibid.*, p. 247.

worship, he was against the complete condemnation of idolatry that we find among the Brahmos.

This reconception of Hinduism by Ramakrishna in personal experimental terms, proving that Vedanta, which is the essence of Hinduism, is not philosophical fancy but verifiable experience, did re-establish ancient Hinduism against the rationalistic criticisms of Brahmo Samaj and the protestant groups. But it still failed to show that there was a social dynamism in it to meet the crying needs of the time. It is this dynamism and fighting quality that was brought into it by the brilliant disciple of Ramakrishna, *Swami Vivekananda*. This he did both by his teachings and by the founding and guiding of the great Ramakrishna movement. His mission in life was to make his master's ideas current in the modern world and to apply them to the problems of life in India.

The essential features of Vedanta according to Swami Vivekananda are as follows.

(1) *Universality*. Vedanta is a universal religion. Religion is one, and that is Vedanta. All other religions are so many individual expressions of this one religion according to the different needs, capacities, and surroundings of various groups of men.

(2) *Impersonality*. All other great religions of the world are based on the lives of their founders. They have their basis in a historical person or historical events. Vedanta is a religion of ideas, of eternal principles, and they are above the accidents and contingencies of history. This does not mean that the value of personality is ignored. It is included and transcended.

(3) *Its rationality*. Vedanta is consistent with the demands of reason, in accord with the methods and results of science. The unity of the physical universe is a recent discovery of science; the Vedantic idea that the Real is one, and all things are only configurations of that reality, is only an extension of that idea to include the whole universe. Religious experience is the data, and Vedanta is the conclusion arrived at by understanding it in scientific terms. It is not only the spiritual oneness of the universe that exemplifies the rational character of Vedanta. All other doctrines of Hinduism, like the law of Karma, the theory of reincarnation, the conception of the evolution of the universe, its conception of the absolute—all show its scientific nature. Reason is not negated in Vedanta, but fulfilled and transcended in the final intuition of Vedanta.

(4) *Its catholicity*. Vedanta excludes nothing. The Real is one,

sages call it by different names. All the gods and objects worshiped by man through all the ages have their abode in the One. All methods of self-realization are paths of salvation: *Karma yoga*, *Bhakti yoga*, *Raja yoga* and *Jnana yoga* have their value and importance and each one is justified.

(5) *Its optimism.* This characteristic of Vedanta was particularly stressed by Swami Vivekananda, and it is in this that he comes to meet the challenge of the social evils of his day and exemplify the dynamic character of religion. It was optimistic because its central doctrine is that man is inherently divine—he is the Very God of God. The *Paramatma* and the *Jivatma* are the same. Therefore the human personality is invested with a sacredness and dignity, it is claimed, unknown to other religions. Man is no mean, miserable creature, a sink of dubiety, a sunken sinner. He is inherently divine. Realization of this should make man feel strong and self-reliant with infinite faith in himself. Not only does Vedanta inspire faith and self-confidence in man; it also gives the strongest motive for social service; for if the sufferer is also inherently divine and the same as the divinity in you, you are only helping yourself when you help the sufferer. Nothing can bring out sympathetic and sustained help more than the idea that it is yourself suffering in the other individual.

Consistent with his robust faith, Swami Vivekananda founded the Ramakrishna Mission in India and organized Vedanta centers in the West. The object of the Mission was not only the preaching of religion but also the doing of social service, rendering medical aid and spreading education. Thus the great new conception of Hinduism expressed itself in the dynamic Vedantism of Swami Vivekananda.

#### IV

It is the continuation of this same reconception of Hinduism, but expressed in a fuller, complete and more scholarly way, that we have in the writings of *Professor S. Radhakrishnan*. After the great commentators, Samkara, Ramanuja, and Madhva, we have not had anyone in the intervening centuries equal to this great Indian philosopher in depth of insight, profundity of scholarship, ease of illuminating exposition. The great commentators were fully conversant with all the opposed views to their own position, but they were unaware of the philosophical thought of other countries. But Radhakrishnan has brought to bear on his reconception or reinterpretation of Hinduism not only a thorough knowledge of his own country's past, but a profound understanding of Western thought and

other religions besides Hinduism. His Neo-Vedantism is based on the historic Vedanta of India, but in the course of building up his system of philosophy he has reinterpreted and newly interpreted the basic conceptions of Hinduism.

Let us consider a few of these new interpretations: (1) One of the commonest criticisms leveled against Hinduism is that it reduces this world to an unreal appearance and deprives all ethical endeavor of any meaning. It is based upon the Vedantic doctrine that reality is one and that all plurality is an illusion. The world of time and space, the historical world, is the world of the many and characterized by change and decay. Therefore the spatio-temporal world was regarded as *Maya*, as an illusory appearance. Things in the world, even ethical enterprises and all efforts signifying serious purpose, cannot in the last analysis have any abiding meaning. The passivity of the Indian, his unconcern with social wrongs and economic injustices, his ready acceptance of the status quo and his general quietism were all attributed to his belief in this doctrine. Not only did the critics of Hinduism interpret the doctrine of *Maya* in this way, but a large majority of Hindus, the unlettered and the uncultured, did understand it in this way.

But a new interpretation of this doctrine is in our possession today. Radhakrishnan will not agree that what has happened is a new interpretation or a new conception. He insists it is only a proper understanding of the teaching. According to this interpretation the spatio-temporal world is no empty dream or inexplicable illusion. It is only a lower order of reality, an order which has no being in itself but only in God. Samkara himself distinguished between three orders of reality—the *Prātibhāsika* or the purely illusory, like the seeing of a snake in a dream, *Vyāvahārika* or the empirical, like the mistaking of a rope for a snake, and the *Pāramārthika* or the transcendental, like the recognizing of a rope as a rope when we see it in the illumination of a lamp. And his position was that our ordinary experience of the world is of the second variety. It will be seen from this that it was not the intention of Samkara to reduce the world to an empty dream.

1. Radhakrishnan himself gives the different significations of the term "*Maya*" as used in Indian philosophy. One meaning of *Maya* is to indicate the incomprehensibility of the relation of ultimate reality to the world of plurality. The second meaning is the one-sided dependence of the world on Brahman. The world rests on Brahman, but Brahman itself is untouched by the world. The term *Maya* is used to account for the

appearance of Brahman as the world, the mysterious character of it. A third use of the term *Maya* is to indicate that the world is not self-explanatory and is phenomenal in character. There are other meanings, but in the present recoinage of the concept of *Maya* what is emphasized is that the world has no basis in itself: it cannot explain itself, it is phenomenal and dependent.

Consequences of this interpretation will be to affirm the relative reality of this world, to attach serious importance to ethical endeavor, and to give meaning to history. The new interpretation has come at an opportune time, for without this new understanding of the spatio-temporal world the whole life of modern India would be an anachronism, left high and dry without a deep philosophical basis. New India is the India of high endeavor, strenuous efforts to expose hoary lies and right ancient wrongs, with a sense of history and audacious aspirations. For the first time in many centuries Indians are talking in terms of historic destiny, of making history. Prime Minister Nehru said of the Bandung Conference, "Success must come to us at Bandung because we are in step with history." Nehru is by no means a neo-Vedantin; he is rather a secular humanist. But the new India that is being built today is the task of the whole nation, and many Hindus are deeply involved in it. The importance of this new interpretation of the doctrine of *Maya* cannot be overestimated.

2. A second reconception or new interpretation is with reference to the Hindu doctrine of *Karma*. It is one of the doctrines that is accepted by all schools of thought in Hinduism. Deussen states the doctrine as follows in his book on the *Vedanta System*:<sup>7</sup>

The idea is this, that life in quality as well as in quantity is the accurately meted and altogether fitting expiation of the deeds of previous existence. This expiation takes place through *bhoktritvam* and *Kartritvam* (enjoying and acting), where the latter is again inevitably converted into deeds which must be expiated anew in a subsequent existence, so that the clock-work of requital in running down always winds itself up again; and so on in perpetuity—unless there comes upon the scene the universal knowledge which, as will be seen, does not rest upon merit but breaks its way into existence without connection therewith, to dissolve it utterly, to burn up the seed of deeds and thus render a continuance of the transmigration impossible for ever after.

The doctrine was criticized as implying an inescapable fatalism, as not allowing for any real freedom or forgiveness, and as being at the root of the terrible evil of untouchability. It may be argued that these conse-

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Deussen, Paul, *The System of the Vedanta*, Chicago: The Open Court Publishing Company, 1912, pp. 353f.



quences do not really follow from the doctrine, but there is no doubt that it was so regarded by a large number of the Hindu populace. If the evil of untouchability has had such a long life and is only yielding to the combined attack of many forces against it today, it is because the common explanation of every calamity that befell a man, including that of being born as an untouchable, was in terms of the past Karma.

This ancient doctrine is reinterpreted or reconceived in quite a different way. It is explained as nothing more than the law of cause and effect in the moral world. Just as in the physical world every effect has a cause, even so in the moral world every action has its own proper consequence. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." There is no possibility of getting away with it. As a Sanskrit verse puts it, as from among a thousand cows the calf will find its mother, so your action will find you out.

The new interpretation explains that the doctrine does not imply determinism and that it is quite consistent with real freedom. Nowhere in this world is it possible for man to be absolutely free, free to do anything he likes and even self-contradictory things. All freedom is within certain conditions, but to be conditioned is not to be determined. The conditions govern only the scope and range of freedom, not the nature of freedom. Even as in the case of a card player, he is dealt out a certain combination of cards and with the limitation of that given set of cards he has freedom to play as he likes. Similarly it is said that past Karma only conditions a man's present life; it does not determine it. Born in a particular set of circumstances, he is free to rise above the circumstances to make them serve his higher ends, or to yield to them and be ruled by them.

Nor is this law a merely mechanical principle operating in its own right, a kind of natural law in the spiritual world. God is its supervisor, *Karmadyaksha*. It is an expression of the justice of God. As Radhakrishnan puts it, "All's law, yet all's God."<sup>8</sup>

Again, the doctrine is not inconsistent with forgiveness. It does not make prayer and repentance meaningless. Of course prayer should not be understood in a magical sense of some coercive power producing anything we want. If a man who is a spirit realizes his sin, repents, and by means of that repentance raises himself by his higher self, he will be redeemed.

Once again it must be noticed that this reinterpretation of the doctrine of Karma is of tremendous practical significance. It comes to undergird the many efforts that are being made by the government and the people

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<sup>8</sup> *The Hindu View of Life*, p. 73.

of India to lift the fallen, to remove untouchability and in general to help the less fortunate to help himself. The changes or the revolution that is taking place in the social realm has come about through other sources than the reformulation of Hinduism. Secular ideas like the worth and dignity of every individual, the possibility of improving oneself by self-effort and use of scientific knowledge, have already permeated large groups of people, have roused the divine discontent in them and are carrying them forward in the line of progress. But the whole social revolution will be speeded up and the last lingering obstacles in the way of its consummation will be removed, if this reinterpreted or properly understood religious doctrine of Karma becomes the common property of the people.

3. Another conception which is taking away the otherworldly character of Hindu ethics and relating it to modern conditions is that of *renunciation*. *Advaita* Vedanta was always associated with the way of salvation by *gnān* or knowledge. According to this method the first liberation is attained when an individual has attained the intuitive experience of his oneness with Brahman. It meant the renouncing of all action and of life in the world of society, and the practice of meditation. Renunciation is now interpreted in terms of the teachings of the Bhagavadgita, as not renunciation of action but renunciation *in* action. What is evil is not the life of action, but the selfishness and desire for fruits that creeps into the active life. The saving ideal is *niskāmya karma*, desireless action.

4. Closely allied with this conception is the new way in which the relation between God and the Absolute is expressed by Professor Radhakrishnan. The ordinary understanding of the relation between the God of theism and the Absolute of the Vedanta was to think of God as less real than the Absolute, Religion and God being the result of a kind of picture thinking. While God may have the intimacy which is one essential characteristic of religion, he does not have the ultimacy which is equally a demand of religion. Radhakrishnan's exposition of the relation between God and the Absolute in his *Idealistic View of Life* is a reinterpretation intended to overcome this suspicion.

According to him the Absolute is pure consciousness, pure freedom and infinite possibility; out of the infinite number of possibilities to choose from, one specific possibility has become actualized in the present cosmos. When we view the Absolute in relation to the cosmic process we call it God. He is not different from the Absolute; He is the Absolute as a self-limited being. He is the creator, the preserver, and the redeemer of the world.



Real religion consists in co-operating with him in his purpose for the world, which is the gradual filling in of all matter by the spirit and the ending of the dualism of object and subject.

All these new conceptions and reconceptions in Hinduism are attempts to reinterpret ancient Hinduism to meet the challenges of the new day in India, challenges which have come from modern science, from schools of Western thought, from other religions and from the seething life in India itself. What will, however, be necessary to complete this transformation is to eliminate and root out the unworthy and irrational forms of expression of the Hinduism of the past. That would mean to say "No," to be prepared to exclude. Whether this would be possible for Hinduism to do, when it has always been tolerantly inclusive, is a question difficult of answer.

## V

What is the bearing of this renaissance of Hinduism on the evangelistic task of the Church in India? Because of the space limitations we will have to confine ourselves to the mere mentioning of a few points without attempting in any way to argue them or expound them at length. In the first place, it must be recognized that whatever transformations and reformulations Hinduism may undergo, and even if it ever should become identical in terms of conceptions with the Christian faith, still there will be fundamental contrasts between the two. There will be a residue, a further irreducible remainder that cannot be assimilated into Hinduism.

Secondly, and because of what has been said above, the Church in India will have to continue humbly and patiently to proclaim the Gospel. She will do this not because of any feeling of superiority or the sense that she has something which other religious faiths do not have, but simply because of an inner constraint to declare "what great things the Lord hath done" for her and for every Christian. To be true to her evangelistic task it is not necessary for the Church to claim that her faith is "the only way" to God, but simply to be sure in her experience that only in Jesus Christ she has received all the riches of the grace of her salvation. "No man cometh unto the Father, but by me," said our Lord, and it is true that there is no other way to a "Father God" except through his Son Jesus Christ. To God as a philosophical Absolute, as *élan vital*, as "that than which nothing higher can be conceived," there may be other ways.

Thirdly, the renaissance in the different non-Christian religions demands a completely new approach to the problem of the relation of

Christianity to other religions. The science of comparative religion will continue to exist as an academic study, and the "reconceptions" in the different religions will tend to show practical identity of ideas. In a sense comparative religion, as it has been understood so far, can never really be a science. Real comparison should be not between the different theologies but between one "faith" and another "faith," between one man's theology as it has crystallized and functions in a living faith and another man's living and active faith. And this is just what does not admit of scientific comparison. There is a uniquely individual *quale* about each man's sustaining religious faith that escapes the dissecting analysis of the science of comparative religion.

This does not mean that the Church can ignore the whole question of the relation between Christianity and other religions. On the contrary she will enter more energetically into this field. But it will be characterized by an entirely new orientation of motive. Her interest will be simply and solely from the point of view of the communication of the Gospel she is constrained to proclaim. It will not be a *criticism* of other religions but a "*critique*" of other religions in the Kantian sense, an attempt to discover why in a particular religion a particular set of questions were asked and answered. To put it in other words, the study will be a discovery of the underlying motifs of a religion, and its use will be so to exemplify the different questions that the Christian faith asks and answers. If it is contended that the Christian faith is no set of questions and adequate answers but only an answer, "the eternal yes," still the new study will be of crucial importance in helping to communicate the answer in such a way as to provoke the appropriate questions to which the Gospel is the answer.

# Communist China

FRANK WILSON PRICE

WHEN HE WAS ASKED to write a book on the religions of China for Hutchinson's University Library, Professor E. R. Hughes of Oxford University responded with the title, *Religion in China*.<sup>1</sup> The slight difference in wording is immensely significant. In the thinking of modern scholars, both Western and Chinese, the old arbitrary division between Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism cannot be maintained. Religious belief is as old as the Chinese race and its continuous culture; the stream of religious ideas and practices has flowed in various channels, and yet the waters have constantly mixed.

Even the newer and more "foreign" faiths, Islam and Christianity, cannot be studied apart from their Chinese environment, although they have preserved more distinctive characteristics than the older religions. Whatever happens to various religious systems and organizations in Communist China, we may be confident that the religious spirit of the Chinese people, manifest during four thousand years of past history, will find some expression in the future.

While "Resurgent Religions" may be a valid object of study in other parts of Asia, on the mainland of China only an opposite movement can be described. Any spiritual revival taking place is not in the religious institutions but in the hearts of men and women with unsatisfied hungers, and this we have no way of testing. The religious stream now running underground may break forth into the open some day with renewed vitality. At the present we can simply describe some of the observable phenomena (with reference particularly to non-Christian religions) and make comments upon their significance.

## I

During the first half of the twentieth century non-Christian religious faith has been on the decline. A religious renaissance might have occurred

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<sup>1</sup> Hughes, E. R. and K., *Religion in China*, London: Hutchinson's University Library, 1950.

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under other circumstances. The Communist take-over of the country, however, has accelerated the tempo of disintegration, and has posed many new and difficult problems for all the religions. Severe limitations have been placed on religious organizations and all their activities. To use again our figure of the stream, the religious current has been largely blocked and must find other directions, satisfactory to the Communist regime.

There are many new factors that must be considered. China's present government is one of the most centralized and powerful in all its history, and is more totalitarian than any previous rule. Therefore the controls over religion, as over all aspects of social life, are stringent. The philosophy of the regime is openly atheistic; religion is considered an "opiate of the people" and a barrier to social progress. At the same time religious freedom is promised in Article 88 of the Draft Constitution of June, 1954, as it was in the Common Program adopted by the First Plenary Session of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference in 1949: "The people of the People's Republic of China shall have freedom of thought, speech, publication, assembly, association, correspondence, person, domicile, change of domicile, *religious belief* (*italics ours*), and the freedom of holding processions and demonstrations."<sup>2</sup>

Communist laws regarding land and property have worked hardship for many religious institutions. Here, too, there is seeming contradiction. Land holdings of Buddhist and other temples, which were in fact endowments, have been confiscated and redistributed in the land reform movement; many temples have been taken over for secular purposes and military garrisons, a process that had begun earlier in the century. Yet the new Agrarian Law clearly states, "Scenic spots and places or historical relics should be carefully preserved. Ancestral shrines, temples, monasteries, church and other buildings . . . should not be damaged." And again, "Monks, nuns, priests, and other religious personnel should be given shares of land and other means of production equal to those of the peasants if they have no other means of production and are able to engage in agricultural work. . . ."<sup>3</sup>

Religious leaders and representatives have not been able to escape the prevailing pressures for ideological conformity. Christian clergymen and Buddhist priests sit side by side in political indoctrination classes. Monks and nuns are considered "parasites" upon society and are required to learn

<sup>2</sup> Article 5, *Common Program*, English translation by Foreign Languages Press, Peking, 1950.

<sup>3</sup> Articles 13 and 21. The Agrarian Reform Law was promulgated on June 30, 1950.

some trade for their self-support. A comparatively small number have been able to take advantage of the promise of agricultural land announced by the government. More serious, the income of religious organizations from free-will donations of the people has been drastically reduced.

The Communist rulers know that the religious impulse in China, as elsewhere, is deep-rooted. They have launched bitter attacks upon obviously superstitious forms of religious belief and behavior and have been exceedingly harsh toward any evidences of counter-revolutionary activities in the guise of religion. On the other hand, their policy toward the more respectable religious organizations has been rather to recognize, direct, and utilize them for the furtherance of Communist objectives. In the interest of self-preservation, religious societies must keep in line and be ever responsive to government orders and suggestions. Chairman Mao stated his attitude clearly as far back as 1940: "For the purpose of taking concerted political action against Imperialism, Chinese Communists may form a united front with certain classes of idealists and with members of certain religious faiths, but they certainly should not approve of such idealism or the religious doctrines concerned."<sup>4</sup>

Direct and indirect persecution of religion by the government of Mao Tse-tung is balanced in some measure by a surprising attention to the historical and cultural treasures of the various faiths. The "New Era" does not mean a complete break with China's rich past. Chairman Mao argues: "We must treat our own history with reverence and not permit hiatuses to break in upon its continuity. Reverence for our own history implies according to history its proper scientific position and thereby doing reverence to historical dialecticism."<sup>5</sup> In fact, pride in China's heritage and the resurgent national spirit have inspired fresh studies of literature, architecture, art, and drama, much of which had once a religious setting. However, the present criterion of judgment is not only literary and artistic appreciation but also the Marx-Leninist concept of "people's culture."

In brief, Chinese religion, confronted by an environment so radically revolutionized, is definitely changing. What the permanent effect of Communist rule and thought upon religious faith and systems will be, we cannot foretell. Influences will probably be mutual, in both directions. A study of some particular manifestations of Chinese religion in the present crisis may throw light on the larger question of trends, today and tomorrow.

<sup>4</sup> Tse-tung, Mao, *New Democracy*, p. 70, in English translation published by the Chinese-American Publishing Company, Shanghai, 1949.

<sup>5</sup> Tse-tung, Mao, *op. cit.*, p. 78.

## II

Chinese religion has been predominantly a religion of the masses, and as such its roots reach deep into the mould of prehistoric times. This ancient religion—a form of nature worship with seasonal festivities, pantheons of family and village gods, sacrifices and divination—is reflected in the Shang Age bronze vessels, inscriptions on bronzes and bones, and the cracks in burned tortoise shells (used by diviners to foretell the future) which archeologists have discovered. Spiritism, the worship of ancestor spirits and nature spirits, influenced even the austere philosophy of Confucianism, and impregnated the abstract doctrines of Taoism until it became in time a polytheistic religion of magic and charms. Folk religion and folkways turned Buddhism, after it entered China, into a religion of the common man, congenial to his desires and hopes for this world and the next. There has been a place for priests in Chinese religion, but never for a priestly caste; in popular novels and dramas the priest or monk has often been the butt of jokes. The religion of the people, then, has been syncretic, absorbing into itself deities and practices from various faiths, and in turn influencing the major historic religions around it.

Wing-tsit Chan speaks of two levels of religion in China, the religion of the masses and the religion of the enlightened.<sup>6</sup> The latter group accept, also in eclectic fashion, the philosophies and teaching of different faiths, with less emphasis upon idolatrous and superstitious forms. In the past even intellectuals have been profoundly affected by popular beliefs and customs; frequently highly educated scholars and “returned students” from abroad would take part in the rites of ancestral worship and other age-long religious observances.

Already, before the Communist victory, folk religion was weakening in China. Many temples were falling into ruin; others were taken over for schools or barracks. Wayside shrines were not repaired. Old gods were vanishing from the scene; no new gods were appearing. Masses for the dead were rarer than in my boyhood days in east China. As scientific education extended over the country, fortune tellers and the professionals in geomancy and exorcism were losing their hold upon the people. Birthdays of local deities, religious festivals, and pilgrimages still attracted large numbers, but the foundations of the popular faith were crumbling. In the past seven years the Communists have given a merciless *coup de grace* to once widespread and widely supported superstitious ideas and practices.

<sup>6</sup> Chan, Wing-tsit, *Religious Trends in Modern China*, Columbia University Press, 1950, p. 141.



We may conclude that Taoism, which has undergirded the faith of the common people, is practically defunct. The People's Consultative Conference in 1949 enrolled seven out of 585 delegates as representatives of religious societies—Buddhist, Islamic, and Christian; Taoism was completely ignored.

However, one indirect manifestation of Taoism, the secret society, has caused the Communist government definite anxiety and has, therefore, met with severe and forcible treatment. To understand this we must know the role that secret societies have played in Chinese history and political life.<sup>7</sup> They have flourished under tyranny and oppression, being a mixture of political organization, religious mysticism, and superstitious exercises. The names of scores of such organizations have been known in the past. The Eight Trigram Society became the notorious Boxers who tried to drive foreigners out of China in 1900 and, later, evolved into the Red Spears. The White Lotus Society, which resisted the Mongol invasion, proliferated into many other societies which fought against the Manchu Dynasty and have continued to the present day.

In direct lineage of this brotherhood is a rather new society called the *I Kuan Tao* (Way of Pervading Unity), known also by other names. As a sect it believes that One is the root of all things, penetrating all existence. In the evolution of the universe all religious systems are vehicles for salvation. Other less attractive features of the society invited the denunciation of intellectuals even during Kuomintang years, but it continued to attract the ignorant and gangster type. One proof of its strength is the fact that the Communist leaders as early as 1949 ordered the suppression of the *I Kuan Tao* and all similar societies. Peking newspapers in 1950 reported that over one hundred thousand members of secret societies had resigned. During 1950 and 1951 a ruthless campaign against the *I Kuan Tao* was pursued; great numbers were executed as counter-revolutionaries. In 1953 a government official reported that more than four million "duped members" had withdrawn and the battle against nefarious secret societies was won. Yet the mention of them has persisted in the Communist press, indicating that there are still pockets of rebellion.

Alongside this news we must place the report that the Chinese Communist leaders are planning to reprint Taoist philosophical literature, beginning with the famous *Tao-teh Ching*; they are also protecting the Paiyun

<sup>7</sup> See: De Groot, *Sectarianism and Religious Persecution in China*, Amsterdam, 1903; "Taoist Secret Societies," *China Missionary Bulletin*, Hong Kong, March, 1951, p. 252-3; Walker, R. L., *China Under Communism*, Yale University Press, 1955, pp. 188ff.

Kuan Taoist Temple in Peking with its library and other treasures. The philosophy of Taoism—the law of Nature, the glorification of *Tao* or the cosmic Way, the doctrine of *wu-wei* or quietism, and the path to immortality—will continue to be studied by persons interested. Wing-tsit Chan has well said, “Religious Taoism is dying; philosophical Taoism will remain as part of China’s heritage.”<sup>8</sup>

### III

Buddhism, though not native to China, has existed in China long enough—since the first century A.D.—to escape any suspicion of “foreignism.” Like Taoism, but to a lesser degree, it has combined with folk religion; yet it has even today a much higher prestige among both the intellectual classes and the masses. Buddhism has enjoyed periods of glory; it has also suffered persecution often during its two millennia in the Middle Kingdom. The first part of the twentieth century has witnessed a twofold trend. While the general influence of Buddhism has decreased, some eminent scholars, such as Abbot T’ai Hsu, Abbot Yuan-yin, and Mr. Ouyang Ching-wu, a Buddhist layman, have tried hard to inaugurate reforms, relief activities, and social service, and in other ways to modernize Buddhism. The Chinese Buddhist Society, organized in 1929, showed a steady growth even during the years of war against Japan.

Today Buddhism is recognized by the Communists as a leading religion of China, worthy of some respect because of its place in Chinese history. Nevertheless, it is vulnerable at many points. It carries too much excess baggage in its outworn, superstitious ideas and worship forms; its philosophy is basically escapist and pessimistic; Buddhist temples and monasteries have lost their important land holdings; Buddhist monks and nuns (numbering 600,000, it was said in 1949) have been forced to find other ways of “filling the rice bowl”; and under the impact of Marxist teaching and economic pressures, popular support for Buddhism has steadily diminished. At the Lunar New Year festival of early 1952 I visited the main temple at the old South Gate in Shanghai. Here I observed a number of people, mostly older women, burning incense sticks and bowing before the images; but the number was much smaller than in previous years.

While the priesthood has been reduced in numbers and influence, the Buddhist laity has evidently grown in strength. Buddhism could always claim millions of earnest devotees, home disciples, and lay scholars. Today this group is guiding the religious organization in its adjustment to the

<sup>8</sup> Chan, Wing-tsit, *op. cit.*, p. 154.



Communist regime, in preservation of ancient treasures, and in new contacts with Buddhists of other lands.

In the months immediately following the end of World War II, I came to know in Shanghai a prominent Buddhist layman named Chao Pu-ts'u. He was an exceedingly friendly, personable, and active young man, eager to co-operate with adherents of all faiths in relief activities and social service. He became Director of the first Boystown in Shanghai, located near a private temple and on the property of another rather wealthy Buddhist layman. Again during the days of fighting before the Communist entry into Shanghai, we were associated in relief work for refugees.

It has been interesting to follow Mr. Chao's career under the Communist regime.<sup>9</sup> His name has been prominently mentioned in reports of various public meetings, receptions to visiting groups and societies as a representative of the Buddhist community. In April, 1955, he was member of a Buddhist delegation that visited Burma, on invitation of Prime Minister U Nu, met with eminent Buddhist scholars and monks, and worshiped at famous pagodas and monasteries. In September of the same year, Mr. Chao helped to welcome a Burmese Buddhist delegation which took back a holy relic, a tooth of Buddha, loaned as an act of international friendship. He went to Japan on the tenth anniversary of the Hiroshima explosion to confer with Buddhist leaders there, regarding the prohibition of nuclear weapons.

Mr. Chao claims that the Chinese Buddhist Association is now uniting all Buddhist sects for the first time in celebration of the 2,500th anniversary of Gautama Buddha's Nirvana, that a modern training college for Buddhist monks is soon to be opened, and that a society for preservation of Buddhist texts has been reorganized. This is said to possess 88,000 wooden blocks on which the complete *Tripitaka* are inscribed. A new monthly magazine, *Modern Buddhism*, circulates in China and other parts of Asia. The Communist government has assisted in the repair and restoration of famous old temples at Mount Omei in Szechwan, at Wutaishan in Shansi, Lin Ying Monastery of Hangchow, and elsewhere; it has encouraged the Buddhist Association in arranging and reproducing a series of writings from Buddhist Classics that has been uncovered in the caves of Fenshan, 170 miles from Peking.

Chao's most extravagant praise is reserved for the interest which the Communist Government is displaying in the fabulous Buddhist caves, images,

<sup>9</sup> *China Reconstructs*, an English monthly published in Communist China, carries in the issue of April, 1956, an article by Chao Pu-ts'u, "New Ties Among Buddhists."

and murals at Tun Huang, on the extreme western boundary of Kansu Province.<sup>10</sup> The process of restoration and protection was begun during World War II by the National Government, and is simply being continued by the present regime. Descriptions of the beauty and historical value of these caves and their contents are not exaggerated. Professor de Loczy was the first Western visitor in 1879. Sir Aurel Stein came here in 1907 and procured valuable book rolls from a hidden library and paintings which he shipped to the West. Pelliot followed the next year, and brought out other manuscripts and photographs. Other treasures were lost to vandals, but this danger was checked by the establishment of The National Art Research Institute of Tun Huang in 1943. Six years later Communist armies occupied this part of the northwest China, and fortunately the Communists have shown appreciation for the great center of Buddhist art. In recent years two foreign visitors have been to Tun Huang and have written glowing descriptions: Irene Vongehr Vincent (Mrs. John B. Vincent) and K. M. Panikkar, Indian Ambassador to Peking.<sup>11</sup>

The oasis of Tun Huang was the port of entry for Buddhist missionaries to China sixteen hundred years ago, a trading center, an outpost of the Chinese empire. Twelve miles from Tun Huang, in steep cliffs overlooking a swift river, rows of caves, now numbering more than 450, were cut out of the soft rock. Succeeding dynasties, such as the Wei and the glorious T'ang, added paintings which were supreme expressions of the mural art—scenes from the life of Buddha, pictures of the Pure Land of the West and Paradise, gods and goddesses, the life of the common people in color. During barbarian incursions and the Mongol invasion, the caves were deserted, the library was sealed, and Tun Huang was forgotten. Today rediscovered, Tun Huang is being advertised far and wide by the Communists, in exhibits over China, on postage stamps, and in descriptions of China's great cultural history. Tun Huang is becoming the center of an artistic revival in Chinese Buddhism, evidence of "cultural relics created by laboring people more than a thousand years ago." The Chinese Communists are safe in such a religious revival, and they can profit from it. At the same time, they are urging Buddhist leaders to create a new religion suited to the new society.

Lamaism, the Tibetan form of Buddhism, has been with difficulty brought under Communist control. The main school of Tibetan Buddhism

<sup>10</sup> Pu-ts'u, Chao, *op. cit.*

<sup>11</sup> Vincent, Irene V., *The Sacred Oasis*, University of Chicago Press, 1954; Panikkar, K. M., *In Two Chinas*, London: George Allen and Unwin, 1955, pp. 152ff; *Journal of Oriental Studies*, University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong, Vol. II, No. 2, July, 1955, p. 324-37.

is the "Yellow Sect" to which the Dalai Lama and Panchen Lama belong; its influence extends through Tibet and into Inner Mongolia. Although the Communists, under pretext of "liberating" Tibet, have stationed large military garrisons all over the great tableland, yet reports of uprisings continue to filter out across the Tibetan-Indian Border or through Nepal. Tibet has been ruled by a Buddhist theocracy and is jealous of its political and spiritual independence. Whether the Peking Government can crush this strong regional sentiment and desire for political and religious autonomy is yet to be seen.

#### IV

Confucianism in Chinese history has been "religious but not a religion." It, too, has been affected by ancient and popular cults and has made peace through the centuries with ancestral worship, congenial to its own emphasis on filial piety, and other social customs. Nonetheless, its main contribution to China has been not as a faith but as a philosophy and ethic for daily living, for the rulers and the people. As a system of political and social organization it has collapsed. Scholars such as Fung Yu-lan and Hsiung Shin-li have sought to reinterpret Confucianism, but they have repudiated their former statements under Communist pressures. Marxian Communism has attacked Confucianism as feudalistic, fatalistic, backward-looking, incapable of inspiring the character needed for the day of revolution.<sup>12</sup> The decline in Confucian culture since 1900, accentuated by Communist hostility, has brought about a seeming disappearance of this great tradition in China's history. No longer are the books of Confucius studied, hardly ever are they quoted.

And yet Confucianism as a way of thought and way of life is ineradicable from Chinese nature and society. For one thing, historians cannot ignore this noble figure and his influence upon two millenniums of Chinese civilization. In 1952 I was still able to purchase some Confucian classics in Shanghai, with both the ancient *Wenli* text and the modern *paihua* equivalent. The Book of Odes, which Confucius edited, is praised as a picture of the common people, their thoughts and feelings, a thousand years before Christ.

The spirit of Confucius will live on in China despite the Communist revolution. It cannot be destroyed without destroying all of China's past. Confucius' teaching had elements both of conservatism and liberalism. The liberal elements in this great moral code with its faith in a moral order of

<sup>12</sup> Sunderlal, an Indian visitor to China, quoted Chou En-lai in somewhat milder vein as saying, "There may be elements of value in the philosophy of Confucius, but it was formulated more than two thousands years ago and is no longer valid." Braden, C. S., *War, Communism and the Religions of China*, Harper & Brothers, 1953, p. 66.

the universe are certain to reassert themselves and become part of the freer and more truly democratic culture that will some day appear in that great land.

## V

It seems strange that Islam, despite thirteen centuries in China, has not become more integrated into Chinese society. In fact, it is an exception to the thesis that religion rather than religions characterize China's spiritual history. The first complete Chinese translation of the *Qur'an* was not made until 1917. The Moslem faith has brought about a fundamental social demarcation between Chinese Moslems and non-Moslem Chinese. A distinctive monotheistic belief, together with special customs in marriage, food, and social life, have tended to create a special community within the larger Chinese community. Chinese Islam has stayed outside of normal Chinese society and also outside the religious stream in China.

No exact statistics of the Chinese Moslem population are available. Some Moslem leaders have claimed fifty to sixty millions but such figures are obviously exaggerated. Twenty million seems a fair estimate, with about half the number in Northwest China. There the Islamic community is even more different, in dress particularly, than in other parts of the nation.

The People's Republic of China established control over Northwest China in early 1950. But the Communists had already made contacts with the Moslems when they were building a base in that area during the war years against Japan. During this period the Red armies failed in large measure to win Moslem support. This was due not simply to the anti-religious policy of the Communists but also to their serious misunderstanding of the Islamic community, both a religious and a social-political minority. The Moslems tended to give their support to the government of Chiang Kai-shek which offered them more independence. Finally Communist-Moslem relations reached the point of a truce, with Moslems in border areas co-operating with some guerrilla organizations.<sup>13</sup>

After the Communist conquest of Northwest China, organized Moslem resistance collapsed in the face of the United Front strategy. The problem of defining the status of China's Moslems and of reconciling their special interests and aspirations with China's new national unity still remains. The Communist leaders will, in accordance with the new constitution, respect certain forms of Islamic belief; they naturally refuse to accept the idea of

<sup>13</sup> See Lindbeck, John M. H., "Communism, Islam and Nationalism in China," *The Review of Politics*, vol. 12, no. 4, October, 1950.

a special religiously based society within their own political and economic system. They will grant cultural diversity but not religious independence. China's Moslems must be fully incorporated into the "New Democracy."

Such a policy cuts across the grain of Moslem tradition in China and also makes more difficult the Pan-Islamism which loyal Moslems in China would like to support. Here the new Chinese regime must move cautiously, because of its relation with neighboring nations of Moslem faith, especially an Islamic state like Pakistan. Moreover, Chinese Moslems desire now to travel abroad, in pilgrimages to Mecca and in visits to other countries where they will associate with people of their own faith.

The extraordinary reconstruction program going on now in Northwest China, the development of new industries there, and the building of railways to connect China directly with the Soviet Union, all make Moslem isolation in that area more difficult than before. In other parts of China, where their numbers are smaller, absorption into the new political and social order will be more rapid.

That the situation is full of tensions is shown by reports of Moslem uprisings. The Peking Government in 1952 admitted a rebellion by 20,000 Moslems in Kansu, in which three hundred Communist cadres were killed.<sup>14</sup> This outbreak and others have been put down by the People's Liberation Army, but conditions are not yet tranquilized. The Communists are training Party leaders to bring these minority areas under eventual complete control. Warnings are constantly published that "narrow nationalism" (of minority faiths) is "contrary to true patriotism and internationalism."

Various small items appearing in the Chinese or world press may be straws in the wind to show how Islam is faring in Communist China. In October, 1955, Muhammad's birthday anniversary was observed in Peking, Urumchi, and other cities. In November a meeting of the China Islamic Association was held in Peking, and an Islamic Theological Institute was opened.<sup>15</sup> A Chinese current events magazine in January, 1956, described the pilgrimage to Mecca.<sup>16</sup>

A recent dispatch from Jakarta reported the return of four members of the Moslem political party who had just visited Communist China. They said that freedom of worship in China was allowed only so long as it did not conflict with the aims of the state. Dr. Ali Akbar described the type of

<sup>14</sup> Walker, Richard L., *op. cit.*, pp. 187ff.

<sup>15</sup> Hong Kong: *Survey of China Mainland Press*, November 19-22, 1955.

<sup>16</sup> *Shih-chieh Chih-shih*, January 20, 1956, p. 26.

worship allowed in Red China as "passive" so long as it did not run counter to the official ideologies.<sup>17</sup>

## VI

Although Chinese Christianity is out of the purview of this article, yet a few brief observations may be made. Christian missionaries have left China but the Christian Church, both Protestant and Roman Catholic, remains—a spiritual force in the life of the nation. Attacks on Christianity as a "foreign" religion and an instrument of imperialism have resulted in a rapid movement toward indigenization, and an almost complete break for the present with ecumenical Christianity. The Christian churches, for the most part, are supporting the new regime and, at the same time, are trying to preserve and witness to their distinctive religious faith. For good or ill, Chinese Christianity is now an integral part of the national life of China, and the forms of faith and practice that will emerge from this encounter cannot be forecast. Gradually contacts are being renewed between Chinese Christian leaders and Christian leaders of some other countries, particularly in Asia. There are no signs now of any resurgence of the Christian religion, even under restraint and persecution, but there are many evidences of faithfulness and vitality.

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<sup>17</sup> *New York Times*, June 15, 1956.



# Japan

ANTEI HIYANE

JAPAN IS AN IMPORTANT, interesting and suggestive country especially in its religious aspect, because the present Japan as well as the past seems to present *the world's religions in miniature*. Its religious soil is so fertile that religions are gathered here as they were in Athens when the Apostle Paul preached there. From primitive Shamanism to Christianity, every religion has its believers; and the manuscripts of Shinto, the New Testament, the Old Testament, Buddhist Scriptures, Vedic Hymns, the Bhagavadgita, the Book of the Dead, the Zend-Avesta, the Koran, and the Chinese classics have all been published here.

When Buddhism came to Japan, the priests were obliged to explain Shinto in relation to it. They arrived at a syncretistic apologetic, in which Buddhism was held to be the reality while Shinto was its appearance; or Buddhism was the cause and Shinto was its offspring. For Buddhism taught that Buddha would transform himself into any sort of being, so that he might save all mankind. Although the government published a law in 1868 differentiating Shinto and Buddhism, nevertheless the ordinary people amalgamate Shinto and Buddhism in their practical belief.

The more intelligent Japanese believe that all religions have the same fundamental nature, quoting a poem: "Though there are many passes at the foot of the mountain, the mountaineers will see the same moon on its summit." This would seem to coincide with the Unitarian or Universalist attitude toward religion. Christians and Buddhists of the Pure Land or Nichiren sects, alone, do not compromise with other religions or sects. And it is very noticeable that those who find a common basis in all religions tend to be indifferent to all religions.

However, the prevailing religious psychology among the common people depends on a fear of the *cursing spirits*. As a Japanese proverb says, "Unworshiped spirits will reward one with curses." Ancestors, men slain by violence, or dead infants, are believed to be wandering about placing a retributive curse upon the living, unless they are deified in a festival. Thus

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the origin of most of the shrines is not so much the respect as the fear of the worshipers. So-called new religions in the postwar period have originated from this primitive belief. If Japan had been a part of the continent, exposed to every invading thought; or if the government had not protected the primitive belief in a hothouse; or if the Japanese had taken religion more seriously, then such a primitive mentality would not exist today.

As most of the Japanese believe in a syncretistic polytheism, the total number of membership in religions far exceeds the whole population. That is to say, one person may belong to many religions. Christian statistics alone can be considered trustworthy, because of the Christians' "intolerant" faith. Even membership in the Pure Land and Nichiren sects is not exactly computed. Most Japanese expect that the more religions they accept, the more blessings they will receive. To an American who stresses exact figures even in matters of religion and who believes uncompromisingly in Christian doctrine, such an attitude seems almost incomprehensible.

#### SHINTO, THREE ASPECTS: FESTIVAL, TEACHING, LEARNING

Shinto means "the way of the gods;" but this faith originated from Shamanism in the Far East. "Shaman" means "priestess," and is a tribal word from Siberia; but Shamanism is accepted widely in Manchuria, Korea, China, and Japan. Shamanism is not yet polytheistic, but polydemonistic, and is mediated through the ecstasy of the priestess. As primitive Shinto was a branch of Shamanism, the priestess was anterior to the priest in Japan. Shinto finds expression in three aspects: festival, teaching, and learning.

*Shrine Shinto as Festival.* The Shinto festival is performed through Shrine Shinto. The Imperial Family, the government, and the common people paid respect to shrines so earnestly and formally that the government treated Shrine Shinto as a semi-national religion, its priests as semi-officers, and the maintenance of shrines was sustained by the National Treasury. But in the postwar period, Shrine Shinto had to become one among many religions, through the Shinto Directive from General Headquarters of the Allied Powers.

*Sectarian Shinto as Teaching.* While Shrine Shinto has neither founder nor scripture nor church, Sectarian Shinto has its historical founder in modern times, a written scripture for preaching, and a group of believers. There were formerly thirteen sects, the major sects being Tenri-kyo (Heavenly Reason teaching) and Konko-kyo (Gold Light teaching); but in the postwar period, since the Religious Body Law was abolished, more than 200 sects appeared.

Shinto was a faith native to Japan, but it was amalgamated with Confucian or Buddhist interpretations until the seventeenth century. But M. Kamo, N. Motoori, A. Hirata and others tried to purge those foreign ideologies so that a genuine Shinto might be clarified under the name of *Kokugaku* (National Learning). As a result, *Kokugakuin* (National Learning College) was established in 1882 for this purpose, with a Department to train the priests for Shrine Shinto.

The more or less common religious elements of Shrine and Sectarian Shinto are polydemonism, polytheism, nature worship, ancestor- and man-worship, oracles, divination, purification, prayer for secular happiness, tablets, magical charms, festivals, etc., combined with an optimistic attitude to the present life; but they have a fear of demons as in Shamanism.

*Monotheistic Trend.* Atsutane Hirata (1776-1843) was one of the famous founders of National Learning, with the most intolerant attitude against the amalgamation of Shinto with foreign thought. But through reading Christian apologetic books written by Catholic missionaries like Matteo Ricci and others working in China, Hirata reached monotheism, a faith in *Ameno-minaka-nushi-no-kami* (Heavenly Centered Master God). But even without Christian influence, Shinto probably would have developed from polytheism to monotheism. Thus it may be said that Shinto has moved toward Christianity, yet the goals of higher Shinto cannot possibly be connected directly with Christianity. Japanese who have grown up under Shinto influence need to abandon this dead-end, and after crossing the deep abyss, reach the totally different basis of revelation in the Old Testament, and start anew from its first line: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth."

#### CONFUCIANISM: ITS SEMIRELIGIOUS INFLUENCE

The first foreign school of thought in Japan was Confucianism, founded by Confucius in China in the fifth century B.C. It is a question, however, whether Confucianism should be considered a religion or not. This Chinese thought might be called a semi-religion, for three reasons. First, Heaven (personified) was an object of their worship in ancient China; second, though Confucius often appears to be agnostic, he had some religious ideas, as Socrates had; third, Confucianism had some relations to Shinto, Buddhism, and popular beliefs in Japan.

In A.D. 284 Confucianism was introduced from Korea; and it was appreciated by the ruling class not so much as religion but as a code of morals and of etiquette, affecting permanently the social organization and

the government of Japan. Among the seventeen articles of the Constitution of Prince Shotoku (574-622), all articles but the second were morality on a pragmatic Confucian basis. The introduction of Confucianism brought with it Chinese culture, just as Buddhism brought Indian culture. Chinese influence was so deep that the compilers of the national history in the eighth century recorded Japanese mythology mixed with Chinese ideology. Even the government performed Heaven-worship, observing genuine Chinese festivals. Though Confucianism started as practical morals, it developed into a philosophical cosmology in the Sung dynasty in China, and Chinese philosophy was introduced and studied by Buddhist priests of the Zen sect in Japan.

Confucianism as a religion culminated in the teaching of Toju Nakae (1607-1648), who preached that as ancestors and all beings were created by the Heavenly Father, Confucianism should be based on filial piety toward Him. It is said that he might have been influenced by Christianity, but this is uncertain. Even without Christian associations Confucianism could have developed such a religious thought, since the Chinese worshiped the personified Heaven in ancient times. So among Protestant pioneering Christians in Japan there were not a few who professed that they had seen the shadow of God in Confucianism.

However, though Confucianism culminated in religious piety toward the Heavenly Father, it cannot possibly merge with Christianity any more than Shinto could, even though it developed a monotheistic belief. As Confucianism completed its religious message, we can discover no connection between its monotheistic conception and the special revelation as we know it in the Old Testament.

Even in China, the native land of Confucianism, the younger generation propagated an anti-Confucian movement more than thirty years ago, because of the downfall of feudalistic ethics. Until a century ago in Japan, every student in the boarding schools and feudal colleges was educated with the Four Books and Five Scriptures of the Chinese classics; but nowadays, very few students study them even in their historical study of Chinese thought. Confucianism has no power, though a Confucian sanctuary is situated in Tokyo.

#### BUDDHISM: PURE LAND FAITH VERSUS CHRISTIANITY

Buddhism was founded by Gautama Buddha in the fifth century B.C. After his death, his disciples preserved the simple historical doctrines with

their disciplines, while new believers developed Buddhism into an elaborate philosophy. The former system was called Hinayana ("small vehicle"), the latter Mahayana ("large vehicle") Buddhism. The former prevailed chiefly in Ceylon, Burma, Thailand and the southern countries, so it is called Southern Buddhism, while the latter in China, Korea, and the northern countries is called Northern Buddhism. Japanese Buddhism is of the philosophically developed Northern Mahayana type, and it was introduced from Korea in A.D. 552.

Buddhists have called Japan a Buddhist country, because so many Japanese, even Christians, have their family graves in the Buddhist temple yard. In this sense it may be natural for Buddhists to call it a Buddhist country, but such a custom began only in modern times. The government of the Tokugawa Shogunate prohibited Christianity most severely after 1639, and published the religious regulation that every family should belong to some Buddhist temple, and Buddhist priests were charged with the responsibilities of religious censorship to carry out the law. In a word, the government used Buddhist forces politically so that Christianity might be exterminated.

So the second foreign religion was Buddhism. Concerning its essential teaching, thirteen sects in Japanese Buddhism insisted upon maintaining their own special convictions. But in the practical life of Japanese believers, the most influential practice is the devotion to Amitabha (or Amida Buddha), the object of the Pure Land (Shinshu) faith.

*The Pure Land Faith.* The founder, Gautama, had taught his disciples an austere and self-reliant road to inner awakening, without dependence on any Divine help. But this difficult religion was possible only to a small number of gifted men, and practically impossible to ordinary people. To meet the common need, a myth arose concerning one who decided to follow the Buddhist road to enlightenment so that, after reaching it, he might save all mankind. This kingly soul, Amitabha, reached his goal, and established the "Pure Land," to which he would welcome after death all believers who called upon his name. This Pure Land Buddhism has been compared frequently with Christianity. But Christianity, with its faith in Jesus, born at Bethlehem in Judea in the days of Herod and crucified at Jerusalem in the days of Pontius Pilate, is significantly different from Pure Land Buddhism, believing in an ideal savior with no historical reality.

It is easily said that Japanese Buddhism is Mahayana Buddhism, culminated in a lofty philosophy; but we cannot conclude that ordinary people

appreciate Mahayana philosophical doctrines! Instead of understanding the Mahayana idealism, epistemology, logic, cosmology, dogmatics, etc., the common people pray for secular happiness and for protection against demons and the menace of transmigration of their souls, and they perform the festivals for the ancestral spirits. In a word, the primitive faith of Shamanism is still the basic one in the hearts of the common people, though they call themselves Buddhists of the Mahayana persuasion.

One handicap of the Buddhist ministry is the fact that the Buddhist Scriptures are too voluminous. Twenty years ago, while the New Testament cost twenty sen, the price of the Compilation of Buddhist Scriptures was more than 800 yen, four thousand times as much. Even Buddhist temples or individual scholars found it difficult to purchase them; moreover, these Scriptures are very difficult to read. When a Buddhist scholar said to me, "We envy the fact that Christians have a pocket Scripture," I responded, "But if the things Jesus did should be written every one, even the world itself would not contain the books that would be written" (John 21:25).

#### CHRISTIANITY: A LIGHT IN DARKNESS

Japan was introduced to Europe first by Marco Polo (1254-1324) as a golden treasure island in the East. The new exploration of seas and lands was largely motivated by the intention of reaching Japan. For instance Vasco da Gama, Bartholomeo Diaz, and even Columbus took up their voyage so that they might reach Japan, an island long desired by Europeans since the time of Marco Polo. The beginning of our modern history really dates from the arrival of Portuguese in Japan in 1543, and of Francis Xavier in 1549 to begin a Christian ministry there. Though historical records report the much earlier arrival of Nestorian missionaries in 736, little is known of their influence.

*Catholic and Orthodox Christianity.* In 1549 Xavier, one of the founders of the Society of Jesus, reached Japan; and it was said that after thirty years the number of Catholic Christian believers reached nearly 300,000. Ambassadors were sent twice to Rome. But because of competition between Christians and Buddhists, along with other social, political, and diplomatic causes, the Christian ministry was prohibited and exiled to foreign countries in 1639. However, Christians concealed their belief, living in apparent apostasy for two hundred years, then made open profession again in 1865. Since the prohibition could no longer be enforced after the opening of the nation to Western influence, it was officially abolished in

1873. The Greek Orthodox Church was introduced by Nicolai, a Russian priest, in 1861.

*Protestant Christianity.* In 1853, the American Fleet led by Perry visited and opened Japan to the world, and it was then that the hymn, "Before Jehovah's awful throne," sung on the ship, resounded along the coast of Japan. In 1859 the pioneering missionaries, such as C. M. Williams, J. C. Hepburn, S. R. Brown, and G. F. Verbeck, reached Japan, and the first Protestant church was built at Yokohama in 1872. It was an interdenominational, self-governing, independent church, though the missionaries of different denominations supported it. But the missionaries of course came from their respective Mission Boards, and the Japanese churches they established came to belong to their respective denominations. The major denominations were Presbyterian, Methodist, Congregational, Baptist, and Episcopal, each displaying the characteristics of their home churches.

But there was an encouraging trend to *church union*. The union of Interdenominational, Presbyterian, and Reformed Churches took place in 1876; that of the Church Mission Society, the Society for Propagation of the Gospel, and the Episcopal Church took place in 1887; and that of three Methodist Churches, the North and South from the United States and the Canadian, took place in 1907. It was in 1925 that the Missionary Conference advised the National Christian League (the antecedent of the National Christian Council) that the League might investigate church union further; and as a result, twelve denominations promoted that ideal, and decided upon the basis of the United Church in 1929. Thus the Church of Christ in Japan (or United Church, *Kyodan*) was realized in 1941; however, the totalitarian policy of the government was partially responsible for this.

#### THE POSTWAR RELIGIOUS REFORMS

On August 15, 1945, Japan approved the Potsdam Declarations and made unconditional surrender to the Allied Powers. It was the same month and day upon which Francis Xavier had reached Japan to begin his Christian ministry in 1549. In the postwar period, one of the most reformed fields has been that of religion; for Shrine-Shinto was separated from the Government, the Religious Body Law was abolished, and the new Constitution guaranteed unconditional religious freedom. Thus opened an unprecedented epoch in the history of the religions of Japan.

On October, 1945, General Headquarters of the Allied Powers declared: "There shall be abolition of the limits of political, social, and religious freedom" and "All laws which have restricted freedom of thought,



religion, meeting, and opinion shall be abolished." Among these laws, those concerning religion especially were the Law of Public Peace and Order and the Religious Body Law. In war time, the Law of Peace and Order had oppressed or arrested some of the adherents of Omoto-kyo, Tenrihondo in Sectarian Shinto, and Jehovah's Witnesses, the Holiness Church, and the Seventh-Day Adventists; but this abolition set such men free.

On December 15, 1945, General Headquarters of the Allied Powers published the Shinto directive, for "Abolition of the governmental guarantee, support, security, supervision, and ministry to National Shinto." This Shinto directive treated Shrine-Shinto as a religion, separated the religion from the national government, and guaranteed religious freedom.

On December 28, 1945, the Government abolished the Religious Body Law of 1939. This Religious Body Law, it was said, had been enacted to promote the sound development of religious bodies and to encourage their activities, but its detailed regulations were not only troublesome but so restrictive that they were in danger of affecting religious freedom. The Law was therefore abolished within a few years after its publication. On the same date the government published the Religious Juridical Person Order. As the Religious Body Law had been enacted to preserve the property, now the Religious Juridical Person Order was necessary to preserve the integrity of property in religious bodies. But a juridical person needs only registration at an office, not any approval from the office. Thus religious freedom is guaranteed.

On January 1, 1946, the Emperor himself denied his own divinity; because especially during the war decade, the ceremonies before the photograph of the Emperor and the Empress had verged upon Emperor-worship. On November 3 the New Constitution was published, and article 20 regulated:

Religious freedom shall be guaranteed to any one. A religious body shall neither receive privilege from the nation, nor use political power. No one shall be obliged to participate in religious conduct, festival, ceremony or performance. The nation and its organization shall not carry on religious education and other religious activity.

Article 89 provided: "Public money and other public property shall not be paid or used for the use or maintenance of a religious organization or body." (The old Constitution, Article 28, had provided: "Japanese subjects shall have religious freedom on condition that they do neither obstruct the social security, nor disobey the duties of subjects"; and the Government treated Shrine Shinto as a semi-national religion.) The new Constitution separated religion from nation and clearly guaranteed religious freedom.

## SHRINE AND SECTARIAN SHINTO REVIVED

During the war the government encouraged all Japanese people, in spite of their differences in religion, to pray for victory at all shrines. Then unconditional surrender came in 1945. The directive separated Shrine-Shinto from the government, abolished all administrative laws and Shrine-Shinto offices, and their business was transferred from Home Ministry to Education Ministry. The desire for unity among shrines was partially fulfilled in an organization called "Shrine Headquarters," but some famous shrines did not participate. As the shrines were deprived of their national subsidies, they are now supported by the distribution of tablets (charms to exorcise evil spirits) and of calendars (showing the religiously acceptable times for sowing, harvests, etc.), by marriage ceremonies, or by house rent. Since they have had to make a new start as a religion, they have been faced with the necessity of establishing systematic teaching and a trained priesthood.

The government formerly restricted Sectarian Shinto to thirteen sects, so that no minor sect could be approved unless it belonged to one of the major sects. But since the abolition of the Religious Body Law, many minor sects have declared their independence. By August, 1950, the Shinto sects registered in the Religious Office of the Educational Ministry reached 206. According to the report of the Religious Office, those Shinto believers consisted of Shrine Headquarters (42,385,000), Izumo Taishakyo (3,854,000), Tenri-kyo (1,455,000), Konko-kyo (693,000), and others.

*Twilight of the Gods.* It is almost a rule that, in a postwar era as well as in wartime, religious activities prosper greatly. So especially in Japan, devastated by defeat and exempted from religious restrictions, the religions became so prosperous that some forms of Buddhism as well as Shinto attracted journalistic interest. The most popular wrestler or *go* expert (*go* is Japanese chess) declared belief in some religion; or a dancing religion made propaganda of ecstatic dancing on the street; or another religion was suspected of tax evasion; or an illiterate foundress of some religion made an itinerant journey over both American Continents. Some religions no sooner appeared than they withered. It is a question how many religions among the 206 listed are still active. It has been said that the most profitable way to make money is to start a religion; and religious news has been a fascinating readable topic.

Certain small shrines have not been rebuilt since the war; but the famous shrines have been reconstructed, and the spring and autumn festivals

are performed more enthusiastically than before. But these festivals are not so much devotional occasions as carnivals. They cheer the people in these tragic times. Though the shrines are legally separate from the government, they have relations with the agricultural program and rural life. They will probably endure in a "twilight of the gods," as long as the Dionysian mysteries did among the farmers in ancient Hellas.

#### BUDDHISM MODERNIZED: REVIVAL OF THE OLD RELIGIONS

Before the abolition of the Religious Body Law, the independence of sects and temples in Buddhism, or the transference of a temple from one sect to another, was not possible; but in the postwar period, assertions of independence and transferences took place rapidly. Before the end of the war, there were in Buddhism thirteen sects with fifty-six branches; but in August, 1950, the number of Buddhist sects reached 186. While most of the priests are satisfied with guarding the graves, presiding at funeral ceremonies, or watching the building of famous temples, some priests have begun an active ministry with Sunday lecture meetings, publication of literature, social work, education for youth, radio broadcasts, etc. A federation of all Buddhist bodies similar to the National Christian Council was organized recently. According to the reports of the headquarters of Buddhist sects, their membership is: West Honganji sect (6,607,000), East Honganji sect (6,375,000), Jodo sect (4,012,000), Soto Zen sect (1,528,000), etc.

Though the government separated Shinto from Buddhism in 1868, on the theocratic principle, the syncretistic tendency was rooted deeply in the people for many centuries. As many as ninety-three sects which amalgamate Shinto, Buddhism, and divination registered at the Religion Office. One prosperous sect has almost the same teaching as Christian Science, but does not profess that name; one sect is called the church of Jehovah, but it has no relation with Judaism or with Jehovah's Witnesses. Such chaotic religions may show the real condition of the common people, confused with so many faiths.

The headquarters of the Christian churches report their membership as follows: Church of Christ or United Church (149,000), Roman Catholic (146,000), Episcopal (20,000), Greek Orthodox (14,000), etc., their total numbers being about 400,000 at most. As the whole population is ninety million, the proportion is less than one Christian to 200 non-Christians; and this small proportion is the fruit of a Christian ministry of about

four hundred years! (For about two centuries of this period, of course, it was prohibited.)

We have said that the Japanese are reviving the old religions. In the first century, when Christianity began to prevail along the Mediterranean coast, a Christian on a ship heard a whisper near the shore, "Pan shall never die." Pan was a god representing the Greek religions. The Japanese Pan will not soon die; but the evening of the gods is approaching. King Olaf, a Christian reformer of Norway, was sailing along the shore of his country. When he left a certain haven, a stranger of grave aspect approached him and said, "You have a mind to put away Thor; have a care!" and the stranger suddenly disappeared. That was the last appearance of the Scandinavian god, Thor. The Emperor Julian revived Greek religion and disregarded Christianity. But when he lay dying in battle, Christian hymns rose around him. And he confessed, "Thou hast conquered, O Galilean."

#### CONFRONTING THE RELIGIONS WITH THE GOSPEL

Religion is a human intention to know the word of God. The fundamental reason for the prevalence of religion in the world is that God created mankind, and created men have an innate aspiration to know the Creator. Man is above all a religious being with a natural yearning to know God. Our souls cannot have peace until they reach God. But unless God reveals himself, no man is able to know him.

So far as religion is concerned, the Jews were the supreme, original, and incomparable people. Their mysterious nature was due simply to the fact that they were a chosen people, upon whom God bestowed the revelation. But the more devoted they became, the more seriously they felt their sinfulness toward God. So God revealed himself more concretely, that he might save them from their sins; and his self-revelation was Christ the Incarnate. The gospel is Jesus Christ; through his cross all mankind can know the love of God, their sin and its atonement, and eternal life. The salvation of mankind is to believe in Christ as the one eternal Word of God.

In a word, Christianity is the only salvation, with an absolute different *quality*, not a relatively different quantity, from Shinto, Confucianism, Buddhism, and other natural religions. Christianity must now confront these Oriental religions in present-day Japan. (1) Christianity is monotheism as revealed in the Old Testament, while those religions are polytheistic. (2) Christianity is theism, belief in the personal God, drawing a distinction between God and his creation; but those religions are pantheistic,

without any distinction between the gods and the world. (3) Christianity draws the line of death between this present world and the next world, or the living and the dead; while those religions have no distinction between the two worlds, believing in communication from the dead through so-called mediums.

(4) Christianity distinguishes between good and evil. Shinran, prophet of the *Pure Land* sect, proclaiming the unconditional grace of Amitabha, said: "Even a good man shall be saved, then how much more a wicked man?" But Paul wrote: "Where sin abounded, grace did abound more exceedingly. What shall we say, then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid." Christianity is an ethical religion, while most other religions tend to be antinomian. (5) Christians repent of their sin, acknowledging themselves guilty toward God (voluntarism); while adherents of other religions simply avoid what they consider sin, i.e., physical impurity before their gods; or they treat sin as ignorance (intellectualism); and above all, those religions have no soteriology. (6) Christianity makes an exclusive claim, and offers the narrow gate; while those religions are syncretistic, tolerant, and compromise with the broad gate. (7) Lastly, Christianity is the good tidings to all people; but those religions are tribal religions, in practice if not in theory, as their regional ministry shows.

#### A STRATEGY FOR THE CHRISTIAN MISSION

It was almost a hundred years ago that the first Protestant missionaries reached Japan, namely in 1859. However, the number of Protestant Christians is only about 200,000, most of them among the intelligentsia. Japanese ministers have witnessed sacrificially, and churches in America have sent many missionaries and given support in many ways, yet the number of Christians in Japan remains so small! For this there are many reasons; but one of the most important is their indifferent attitude to the native conditions of the non-Christian soil. The Japanese have believed in Shinto, Confucianism, Buddhism, or their syncretistic faith, for centuries prior to the coming of Christianity. A study of those non-Christian religions should be more earnestly made, so that Christian ministry may more effectively speak to them.

Christianity is neither one among the religions nor the highest stage of religious development. It is the absolute religion, the one and absolute revelation from God, as Peter said: "In none other is there salvation; for neither is there any other name under heaven, that is given among men,

wherein we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). The urgent problem in Christianity is not to find the common element with other religions by generalization, but to demonstrate its uniqueness against other religions. Japan is not only a miniature of the world religions, but also an Armageddon where Christianity shall win the last victory over all religions. Christian theology must demonstrate the absolute nature of Christianity; and to realize this, two ways are open. The one way is that of Christian apologetics, the other way is that of comparative religions. While the former method is subjective and deductive, the latter is objective and inductive.

In concluding this presentation, let me appeal for the establishment of an Institute for the purpose of studying non-Christian religions in Japan, that the following purposes may be realized. (1) That all religions in Japan might be studied from the Christian point of view. (2) That the absolute nature of Christianity might be demonstrated. (3) That a practical ministry to non-Christian religions might begin. These may be accomplished in the following ways: study for special subjects, discussion, a library, publications; training of Japanese ministers and foreign missionaries; fellowship with non-Christian priests; a religious museum; communication with foreign Mission Boards; lectures on comparative religions in theological seminaries.



# Challenge and Christian Answer

EDMUND DAVISON SOPER

## I

IN A UNITED PRESS DISPATCH from Rangoon, Burma, on May 23, 1956, I read: "Pilgrims flooding to Buddhist celebrations created the worst traffic jam in history on the road to Mandalay. Some 100,000 persons flocked to a vast stone and concrete cave eight miles outside Rangoon to see 2,500 youths become monks." Is there a revival in Eastern religions? One only needs to keep his eyes open to find notices of what is taking place.

Here in the capital of Burma, a nation which is officially Buddhist, under the leadership of U Nu, the Prime Minister, the people are celebrating the twenty-five-hundredth anniversary of the death of Gautama Buddha, the founder of their faith. He started a religious movement in India which has spread into Ceylon, Burma, Thailand, China, Korea, Japan, Tibet, and Mongolia, not to mention other smaller regions in which it is to be found. For two years, that is, since 1954, the Sixth Council of Buddhism has been in session, and is closing during the week these words are being written. The dispatch noted above records one of the events in that celebration.

During these two years several thousand monks have taken turns in large groups intoning the entire sacred literature, which is about twice the size of our English Bible. They are also revising the text and planning for further translations, with a view to its use in lands yet to be reached. Under government auspices a Buddhist university is being projected, for the library of which the Ford Foundation has made a grant of \$250,000. In the Western world we are beginning to hear Buddhist scholars proclaiming their faith in universities and before learned societies. Professor G. R. Malalasekera of the National University of Ceylon is well known for his lectures on various phases of Buddhism. Professor D. T. Suzuki of the

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Otani University, Kyoto, Japan, probably the best known of Buddhist scholars in the West, is at present teaching in Columbia University.

So in Buddhism at least there are signs of a deep stirring and of an ardent campaign to let the world know what this faith has to offer to help "assuage the troubles of these days." The claim is made that the only hope of peace on earth lies in Buddhism. It is pointed out that the two devastating wars of the twentieth century have been fought for the most part by so-called Christian nations. Buddhism can bring the peace, they claim, that Christianity has failed to achieve.

We are bound to keep in mind that Buddhism is sadly divided. The Council now completing its sessions in Rangoon represents Ceylon, Burma, and Thailand, but not the great Buddhist constituency of the northern countries in Asia. The southern Buddhists are commonly called the *Hinayana*, the "Little Vehicle," because they hold that only those who become monks, separate themselves from family life and enter a monastery, can be emancipated and enter Nirvana. In some future rebirth the laity will have their chance to become monks, but in the meantime their chief duty is to support the monks in their monasteries. But these *Hinayanists* prefer to be called *Theravadins*, or Followers of the Elders, those who in the earliest days of the faith preserved and taught the pure doctrine of Gautama Buddha. This original doctrine came out of the thought and experience of the Buddha, who believed that all life involved sorrow and misery, that the cause of the malady was desire—every human desire—and that the cure was to be achieved only by eradicating desire. Thus there was no worship, no prayer, no dependence on a higher power. On the other hand the Buddhists of the northern lands belong to the *Mahayana*, the "Big Vehicle," in which many more than monks can participate in the faith and look for its rewards in this and successive lives. The present revival began among the *Theravadins*, who feel that they are the true, the orthodox believers. While I was in Singapore a Ceylonese scholar addressed a large group of Chinese Buddhists, pleading with them to return to the faith of the Elders, original Buddhism. What will come of the several moves such as this to bring the two widely separated branches together, it is too early to prognosticate.

In China at the present time there are no evidences of a revival of Buddhism or of the more ancient Confucianism or Taoism. These religions are being compelled to fight what appears to be a losing battle with the dominant Communism which is bent on their suppression. There are also no evidences of a Buddhist rebirth in war-torn Korea or in the more back-

ward countries of Tibet and Mongolia, where at best the form of the religion has been compromised by baser elements introduced from Hinduism in India. But in Japan the case is different. Here Buddhism has developed and flowered as in no other nation, even including the lands of the Theravadins in the South.

Buddhism in Japan until the close of World War II was divided into thirty sects and sub-sects. Since that time, however, it has proliferated in an almost unbelievable fashion, so that today the number of sects approaches two hundred. Of course the older sects retain their prestige, and most of the new sects recorded in the government offices are very small and likely to pass out of existence in the days to come. Of the larger sects, two particularly demand our attention.

1. The Shinshu sect was founded by a very remarkable man named Shinran Shonin (A.D. 1173 to 1262). He built upon the work of a predecessor Honen, who proclaimed the doctrine of salvation by faith, faith in Amida, the most powerful of the multitude of deities and other heavenly beings with which Mahayana has run riot. Shinran felt that Honen had not gone far enough; that while he proclaimed salvation by faith, he insisted that this faith must be ritualistically expressed. According to Honen a believer must repeat constantly the phrase, "Hail Thou, Amida Buddha," or his faith would count for nothing. Shinran rightly saw that this was not salvation by faith alone but salvation partly at least by "works," as Paul and the Protestant reformers would have put it. So Shinran went the full distance and preached the doctrine of salvation by faith and faith alone, Luther's *sola fide*. Can we wonder, then, that the leaders in this largest of the Buddhist sects should call the Christian missionaries to task? "What are you doing here? You are only teaching the doctrine which we have been proclaiming in Japan for centuries."

The unwary may be convinced by these statements, or at least deeply perplexed. Further knowledge should cause him to see the matter in an entirely different light. There are two significant differences between the Shinshu teaching and that of Christianity. In our Christian doctrine, when a man is saved he is saved *from* his sins. We are told that he becomes a new creature or a new creation in Christ Jesus. On the other hand, the Shinshu idea of being saved is that of a future salvation in a "Western Paradise" which Amida has prepared for those who put faith in him. So far as the present is concerned, a man is saved *in* his sins, not *from* them. Shinran repudiated the idea of a man's being a sinner. A man does not

really have to "quit his meanness" to be a consistent Shinshuist, so long as he places his future at the disposal of Amida.

The other difference is, if possible, more important. Jesus Christ is a historical character, a real man who walked on our planet at a definite time in human history and in a definite geographical location. That is, we know what God the Father is like because he was revealed or made known in Christ in such a manner that we can know his character and his purposes for the sons of men. Amida on the other hand is a figment of the imagination, a human construct with no historical connection with our planet and humanity. As a Christian Japanese minister said to me in South Japan, "I was once a Shinshuist, but I came to realize that it was far more reasonable to put my faith in one whom I could really know than in one of whom I could not be sure."

2. The other Mahayana sect in Japan which has significance for us is that of Zen. It is entirely different from the Shinshu, having nothing to do with any deity except the divine we may realize in ourselves. Zen is the meditative sect. From the earliest years of their novitiate young boys—and many of them are very young—are trained to control their bodies, for the reason that only by first perfecting bodily control can they expect to attain a greater value, the control of their thoughts and minds. The ultimate objective is to exclude all the sensations that pour in on them from the outside, and also to rid themselves of all intellection or discursive or rational thinking. Only in that way can they reach what is deepest in their essential being. By a flash of intuitive insight they may come to a realization that they have attained the final goal, they have achieved the Buddha nature, *satori*, as it is called. Now we ask, "What is this experience you have attained? Tell us what this state is." And the answer is complete silence. The experience is ineffable, not to be expressed in human words or understandable concepts!

No wonder that some deeply religious Japanese shy off from what is so abstruse and impracticable. And yet Zen is a form of Buddhism which is advocated by such learned and sensitive spirits as Professor Suzuki, whose many volumes, translated into English, are being read widely in Great Britain and the United States. The Buddhist Society of London is responsible for the publication of the new, uniform, complete edition of Professor Suzuki's works. Christmas Humphries, a London barrister and President of the Buddhist Society, has written a book on *Zen Buddhism*; and the latest volume by Aldous Huxley, entitled *The Supreme Doctrine*,

is an exposition of Zen. These are only two of the growing circle of Western intellectuals who are Zen followers.

In Zen there is no God to be worshiped, no prayers to be offered. It is one of the most conspicuous illustrations of what must be referred to in this article as self-salvation. All that is to be attained is to be accomplished by one's own efforts. A person has tutors and preceptors, to be sure, but their function is solely to point to the right way. Salvation is attained by each one for himself and by his efforts alone. Could there be a more glaring contrast to the Christian gospel that we cannot save ourselves, but that it is God in Jesus Christ who saves us from our sins, our guilt, our lower nature, and puts us on our feet, forgiven and remade in the likeness of our Lord himself?

## II

Here we may introduce a consideration which applies to Hinduism as well as Buddhism. Not only is the salvation which is offered in these religions for the most part self-salvation, but both of these faiths are terribly hampered by the universally held doctrines of transmigration or rebirth, and karma. A person dies, but his essential being, according to Hinduism his soul, is reborn again and again, times without number. In some forms of Buddhism, notably the Theravada, there is said to be no permanent entity or soul; but still, another being is born to inherit the sum total of a man's good and evil acts—and this process goes on and on. So its effect on any living person is the same as that of the doctrine of the continuing soul.

A person is what he is because of what he has been in previous lives; healthy or diseased, rich or poor, nasty or kindly-dispositioned, successful or a ne'er-do-well, a high caste intellectual or an ignorant beggar—all his characteristics are his because of his past. This retribution or reward, as the case may be, is determined by the inexorable, impersonal power of karma. No deity has anything to do with it; in fact many believe that the gods themselves are under the domination of this blind force. Karma has no mercy. A person will reap fully the reward of virtuous acts, but just as surely he must suffer for his evil acts to the last ounce of retribution. Whatever differences there may be in the various Hindu and Buddhist beliefs, all may be counted upon to be held fast by this inescapable law.

Hence there can be no forgiveness in these religions. In fact the declaration is sometimes made by their advocates that forgiveness is immoral—it toys with the moral values by allowing the forgiven person to escape the full recompense for the evil he has done. What such a charge overlooks

is that, in the Christian scheme, forgiveness must always be preceded by repentance. A sinner turns away from his evil doings and wrong attitudes and by the act of forgiveness enters into a new relationship with God, a relationship so intimate and powerful that he is transformed, made into a new creature. The things he once loved, now he hates, and the things he once hated, he now loves. He is the same person, but transformed. In contrast, even in Shinshu in Japan, the man who puts his faith in Amida for the next life still remains the same person, with no joy in the new relationship with God and no new accession of strength to live on a higher plane.

To Hindus who have come into contact with Western thought and with Christianity, this belief in the law of karma is a very inconvenient feature. They feel the upsurge of a desire for human freedom in relation to their own lives and personalities, which they see is attainable in Christianity but not in their own religion. This results in the attempt to lessen the sharp edge of their teaching and assert some degree at least of personal freedom. No clearer evidence of this is to be found than in Professor S. Radhakrishnan, Vice President of India, and one of the leading Indian philosophers. He very boldly asserts human freedom, regardless of the teaching of the sages. How can he help it, when he has entered so deeply and sympathetically into the mind and heart of the West? Yet the law of karma is there, laying its iron grip upon the lives of countless millions and holding them in dread and even despair, as they face the future with its uncertainty, unbroken by the hope which the Christian holds—that he is in the hands of a personal, loving God rather than bound to the wheel of the blind force of karma.

Coming more directly to Hinduism, one of the things which strikes a thoughtful visitor to India is the difference between what he sees around him in countless temples and shrines, the popular Hinduism of the masses, and what he reads in the writings and hears in the conversations of highly educated Hindus. This latter so-called Neo- or Essential Hinduism is the philosophy which comes down from the ancient Upanishads, the Vedanta Sutras and the Bhagavadgita (commonly called the Gita, the "New Testament" of modern Hinduism). We may dismiss popular Hinduism with but a brief reference. There are no signs of significant new life in any of its forms.

In part of the ancient literature there are conceptions that are still presented to the eye in the places of worship today in forms unfortunately



gross. Who can stand and look on without a feeling of dismay at the worship of the bloodthirsty Kali in the city of Calcutta (named after Kali), where little goats are decapitated so that their blood can be slapped on the protruding tongue of the goddess? How can any good come from the worship of a goddess of such character? And yet, wonder of wonders, all over Bengal worshipers call upon her in distress as a beneficent being: "Mother Kali, O Mother Kali, give me what I need." Or go almost anywhere in India where the great god Shiva is worshiped, and you will find in the temples and shrines representations of the human organs of reproduction, anointed with *ghi* and garlanded with marigolds. Hindus may and do philosophize about these emblems as symbols of the generative power in the universe; but why, oh why must the people center their worship on the physical likenesses of the procreative organs of their deities?

Or consider one of the most popular gods, Krishna, an *avatara* (something like an incarnation in Christianity) of the great god Vishnu. In the Gita, Krishna is a noble counselor of the prince whom he serves in the disguise of a charioteer. But this is not the picture of Krishna in the minds of the common people, who hear and repeat over and over again the stories found in the Puranas and the Tantras, parts of the ancient literature. There Krishna with his flute spends his time in impure gambols with shepherd maidens on the hills, particularly with Radha, his favorite—who is a wife, and thus is committing adultery with Krishna. These things are as unpleasant to repeat as to read about or to see, but we must realize the distance between all this and the Neo-Hinduism of the scholars, the Hinduism now invading the West and finding ready listeners in increasing numbers. And be it said, and that very clearly, that many, many high-minded Hindus turn away from these popular manifestations as unworthy of real Hinduism.

What of the Higher or Essential Hinduism to which we of the West are being introduced? It is the Vedanta philosophy, coming out of the ancient books and being given the interpretation, now accepted by nearly all of its advocates, of the eminent philosopher Shankara, who taught at the end of the ninth century of our era and into the tenth. It is now the great concern of the Ramakrishna Mission to propagate this teaching far and wide. The mission is conducted by a large group of celibate monks, intelligent and highly educated, who do their work in many parts of India and in cities of Western Europe and the United States.

Their inspirer, Ramakrishna Paramahansa, was a very remarkable, high-minded man of spotless character, who was the Brahmin priest of a little temple a short distance outside Calcutta. He passed away in 1886.

He himself had little education, but was endowed with high intelligence and became informed and deeply interested in religions other than his own. So far did he go that he set up varied shrines in his courtyard, and would worship Allah, the Islamic God; Ahura Mazda, the ancient God of Persia; God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and others at will. In fact his followers now declare that his chief contribution to religion was the doctrine that all the religions are essentially the same, equally valid, so that it makes no difference to what religion a person may belong. Ramakrishna's chief disciple was the Swami Vivekananda who, after his master's death, organized the order and named it the Ramakrishna Mission after his revered leader.

The core of the teaching of the Mission is what was central in the thought of Shankara. There is only one reality in the universe, Brahman. This has been called pantheism, but the preferable term is monism. Pantheism implies a theistic foundation: there is a God, and God is everything and everything is God. But there is no divinity in this system at all. What of all the deities in the other religions, are they not real? No, they are not. They are only seeming existences, and will cease to be when men are completely emancipated. So the better term is "monism," for that does not carry the implication of the presence of any deity. But let us look a little closer. Brahman is the only existence, the sole reality, and, *mirabile dictu*, each one of us in his essential nature is Brahman. We are Brahman, the only difficulty being that we do not know it. So the aim of all the Ramakrishna teaching is that, through yoga discipline and long continued intensive meditation, each man may finally come to realize the truth, and cry out, "I am That"—that is, Brahman.

The Christian cannot but ask, what kind of existence or being is Brahman? He is attributeless. To every question as to the nature of Brahman the answer is *neti, neti*, "Not that, not that." So it becomes evident that the ultimate reality is not personal, is beyond the distinction between right and wrong, and cannot love or be merciful. His experience, if such a word can be used at all, is "contentless consciousness," and that is the ultimate destiny of every human being, for he is Brahman and has his attributeless character. He is to realize at length that he is a consciousness, but without thoughts or emotions, just contentless.

How can a Christian do anything but pity those whose prospect is so subhuman? Surely this is a conception far below that of a life lived in the consciousness of divine forgiveness here below, with joy and fullness of experience now on earth—with the further prospect, after this transient,

earthly existence, of a life of conscious fellowship with the God of Love and with Christ Jesus our Lord and Savior and the company of the redeemed in heaven.

### III

What is the picture of Islam in the world today? No significant stirrings can be found in the life of the great masses of the people. Yes, they are being incited to action against the Christian missionary, against Israel, which they look upon as an interloper in the Middle East, and against France in North Africa. That is, the political moves and agitations we read of almost daily in the press have to a considerable extent their origin and intolerant zeal in the religious motive formulated by their leaders. But Islam goes on in much the same way as in the past, with very few of the devotees realizing that a new day demands a new outlook and a new method of procedure. What of the educated intellectual, however, the university-trained man, especially in Egypt and India? There is a vivid awareness among a growing number that the old apologetic and the old attitude, especially toward Christianity, are outworn and must be changed.

But what can be done? Two recent contacts with educated Muslims visiting in the United States have given me ample evidence of the desire to be friendly with Christianity, and so to interpret their faith that it will not be open to the criticisms leveled against it for ages by Christian apologists. The reinterpretation of the teaching of the Koran is very prominent in the presentation of the meaning of Islam. How far can this be carried without impinging on the agelong and inflexible theory that the Koran is the uncreated word of God, and that (in the Arabic text) it is the letter-perfect reflex of the will of Allah for men in every age and in every place?

And what can be done to mitigate the charges made against Muhammad himself, the Prophet, the Seal of the Prophets, charges made on the basis of passages in the Koran and in the Traditions of the Prophet which have been and are accepted by all Muslims as authentic? No interpretation can vindicate the conduct of the Prophet in the light of the clear statements of his extreme, inexcusable cruelty on a number of notable occasions, and of his undoubted weakness in his relations with women. He allowed his followers only four wives at a time; yet during the last years of his life he indulged himself with eleven, not to speak of several concubines, one of whom bore him his only son. All we can do as Christians is to ask Muslims to read our New Testament and to set the Crystal Christ by the side of Muhammad. The difference is striking. That is our readiest and most effective answer to Muslim claims and charges.

We have made a rapid survey of the three great religions which in one way or another are taking a new lease on life and trying to meet a new world situation in a more effective way. Now we may attempt to summarize the Christian answer, which has been suggested a little here and there along the way.

#### IV

Is there any highly significant center from which we may start and which gives meaning to all that we may say? There surely is. We believe that Christianity is "unique" not only in the sense of being different from all other religions but in the sense of being unrivaled, superior to them all. We believe Christianity is unique because Christ is unique. All that can be said centers in him. It is through and in him that the two great needs in the lives of men are fully met.

1. He made known what God is like. He did this by coming to earth as *the incarnation of God* in human flesh as a real man. "God was in Christ," as Paul put it in one of his most memorable utterances. It was God himself who was in Christ, and in Christ we can learn what God is like. He was the perfect image of the invisible God. As a man he knew our thoughts and could speak our language. The revealing process came to a climax in the cross. There we see in the Suffering Savior the God of Righteousness and the God of Love. No longer could the veil of the temple hide God from men. It was "rent in twain from the top to the bottom," as the Gospel record tells us, so for the first time in history we could look right through and see God as he is.

Jesus Christ could thus reveal the nature and character of God because he was at the same time both divine and human. How this could be has been pondered upon since the beginnings of our religion, it is still the supreme theme of Christian theology, and no one has reached a completely satisfying conclusion. This is not to be wondered at, since we here stand before the most profound mystery of our faith, which human wisdom fails to fathom. But we accept the doctrine as true that in Christ we are shown what God is like, revealed in terms which we limited human beings can understand. Had he not been divine, the Divine Nature could not have been revealed; had he not been human, we could not have understood what he meant. May I use the homely figure of an electric transformer, which receives a current of 220 volts and steps it down to 110, thus making it available to use in an electric shaver, for example, which would otherwise have been burned out and ruined. Christ steps down the current of God's

majestic glory, righteousness, and power so that we can take it in and make use of it, and not be overwhelmed by his essential greatness. And, wonder of wonders, this gospel is given us in the form of a story. It is not a philosophy which only the learned can understand, but a story so simple that the young can rejoice in it, yet so profound that we shall still be learning new depths of meaning in its recital—until we enter into complete fulfillment in the presence of God himself and in the company of all the redeemed of every land and of every time.

2. And the God who was in Christ was *reconciling* the world unto himself, thus meeting the other basic need in the lives of men. As soon as men come to themselves, they cry out with the Philippian jailer, "What must I do to be saved?" or, put in modern parlance, "What can I do to get out of the mess in which I find myself?" Man's need of forgiveness and being in right relations with himself, his fellows, the universe in which he lives, and with God, can only be met by God himself. Christianity is the only religion with a cross at its center, breaking the heart of man, saving him from the power of guilt and sin, and sending him on his way redeemed and rejoicing. The cross is where men meet the God of Love and Mercy face to face, and receive the assurance that he cares—cares so much that he "gave his only Son that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life." That is the gist and center of the Christian gospel, the real "good news" which all men everywhere need and which will create a new world of peace and joy based on fellowship—fellowship with God through his Spirit, and fellowship with all those who seek him in spirit and in truth.

## Rethinking Missions

E. L. ALLEN

THE TITLE OF THIS ARTICLE has been taken, as will at once be recognized, from the report of the Laymen's Commission that visited the mission fields in the Far East between the wars, under the distinguished leadership of William Ernest Hocking and Rufus Jones. I was at that time minister of Kowloon Union Church, Hong Kong, and had the opportunity of meeting several members of the Commission. I do not suggest, however, that what follows is in accordance with their report. That indeed could hardly be the case, as circumstances have changed so much since that day.

If the rise of Communism to power in China ranks as the most momentous political event of the last twenty years, then the expulsion or withdrawal of missionaries from that country may well be considered as the most serious setback the Christian cause has sustained during that period. What makes it even more serious is that there are indications that the nationalism that is astir in so many other parts of the world may prove as unfriendly to missions as Chinese Communism has done. Opinions differ as to how Indian policy in this matter is to be understood. Certainly, the new Islamic republic of Pakistan has written religious liberty into its constitution, but it is not certain that society will underwrite what the law decrees on such a point. Before the year closes, the Gold Coast and Nigeria may be expected to achieve independence. As far as the Northern region of Nigeria is concerned, it is by no means certain that a Moslem ruling class will continue to allow the Christian churches the freedom they at present enjoy.

It would be good if we who represent the missionary effort could think that we are guiltless, that this frustration is but a calamity of which we are the innocent victims! Alas, it is not so at all. We are ourselves, at least in part, to blame for what has happened. Any criticisms I offer here are directed in the first instance against myself and against others only

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as partners in the same errors. As one who worked as a missionary for more than five years in South China, I have to confess that I said and did in all good faith not a few things that I now could wish had neither been said nor done. Most of us strove hard to distinguish between our commendation of the Gospel and the thrust of imperialism upon a weaker people. We cannot claim to have succeeded; we dare not even say that we might not have been even more discriminating.

Meanwhile, there has been a change of opinion at the home base. During the recent war, many men on active service made contacts, often indeed superficial, with a non-Christian religion and formed a favorable judgment on it. A growing literature on the subject has made the reading public aware of the rich spiritual heritage of the Oriental peoples. The old easy assumption of superiority is no longer possible for us. Awkward questions are therefore being asked from within the church. Is the foreign missionary enterprise really justified? Was it not in its time a phase of that imperialism that is now discredited? What right has the West to impose its religion on the East? It is to doubts such as these that the present article is addressed.

Let me begin by repudiating, as emphatically as I may, a conception of missions that may or may not still be found within our churches; it certainly bulks large in the minds of our critics. It is the view that the aim of missions is to persuade people who hold a religion other than ours to abandon that and to accept ours. It is said that a distinguished American student of Buddhism was greeted on his return from a tour of the East with the remark, "I suppose you have come back convinced that it is stupid to send missionaries to China to turn good Buddhists into bad Baptists."

Where such a view of missions *is* held, there is grave danger of spiritual arrogance on the part of those who engage in it. They possess a superior religion and they bend their energies to persuading others to accept it as a substitute for their own. Another danger is that, once you begin to think in terms of this kind of conversion and make the adoption of your religion an end, you may not be as scrupulous as you should be about the means employed. There have been notorious instances of this in the case of missions to Jews particularly. Advantage has been taken of the plight of refugee parents to induce them to allow their children to be brought up as Christians. As some of us now look back, it does not seem as obviously right as it did at the time that, for example, treatment in the out-patients' department of a mission hospital should be dependent on attendance at a Christian service.

I do not wish to be understood as repudiating conversion in all senses

of the term. Far from it! I wish only to disavow it where a change of religion is the end aimed at. What, then, is to be put in its place? I would say that the missionary task is one of *witness*. We go to bear witness to Jesus Christ in all the world. This of course presupposes that he is of supreme worth to us in the first instance. He is so great in our eyes that we cannot think of keeping him to ourselves, but want to share him with all mankind.

Our concern is not with Hindus and Buddhists and Moslems, but with men and women who were made for God and who seek after him if haply they may find him, who suffer and sin, who are prisoners of their past and who long for freedom. We believe that Christ can give them what they need. Our purpose therefore is to bring them face to face with him, so to speak of him and so to live for him that they shall be persuaded of his reality and come to reckon with him in acceptance or rejection. If this is so, then the justification of missions is a personal question. Do I regard Christ as of such moment that I am eager for all to meet him?

There is of course nothing new in this conception of missions. What is new, I think, is the realization that the task is much more difficult than we had imagined. An earlier generation of missionaries did not doubt that it was possible to detach Christ from any Western setting and to present him *simpliciter* to the peoples of Africa and the East. But can we in fact do this? It seems rather that we are never able to offer Christ as such to men, but only something of our own, some version of Christianity which is more or less inadequate to him. The institutions we set up are Western in origin, our language and thought-forms are conditioned by centuries of historical development, our culture and tradition are alien to those among whom we work.

Equally serious is the fact that our standard of living is princely in comparison with that of our fellow workers from the indigenous churches. The missionary who finds it difficult to make ends meet may yet receive as much in a month as his assistant earns in a year. So when we bear witness to Christ under such conditions, we must do it in shame and penitence, keenly aware that even our most sincere efforts to commend him may have that about them which actually repels men from him.

It follows from this that the missionary must go abroad to learn before he begins to teach. He must know the people to whom he brings the Lord as well as the Lord he brings to them. It is unfortunate when, as in parts of West Africa, a missionary can do his work in his own language; for then he never sees the people as they really are, but only as they

look when dressed in clothing they have borrowed from us. The missionary must seek to enter into the spiritual tradition of those among whom he lives; he must familiarize himself with the proverbs that embody the wisdom of the common people and with the books that enshrine the wisdom of their sages. He must in India come under the spell of the Gita, in China thumb the classics, and in Japan learn how it is that the gracious figure of Amida Buddha has brought relief to so many troubled souls.

He must be none the less aware of the darker side of life in the non-Christian countries, of the ignorance and superstition that lurk in the temples of the gods and in the minds of their worshippers. Here I can complete the anecdote of the scholar to whom allusion was made earlier. His reply to the critic of missions was, "I have traveled far and wide in China, and the number of good Buddhists I met could be counted on the fingers of my two hands." Where such a state of things obtains, a missionary will be unwise to rejoice that an ancient religion has lost its power. For man cannot live in a spiritual vacuum for long. What has happened, that a religion that nurtured multitudes for so long should not now be able to speak to their condition? This is the question that should be asked.

I am not arguing merely on grounds of expediency, as though our task were to find some way of living through the immediate difficulty. There is a definite point of view behind all that has been said so far, a theology if you will have it so. To those who dislike it, I can only reply that close personal contact with the best and the worst in more than one non-Christian religion has made it impossible for me to think otherwise.

I never entered a Chinese village for evangelism with the sense that I was taking Christ there for the first time, but always as one convinced that he had been there before me. There is a latent Christ in the hearts of men the world over. In India and China and Africa he walks the Emmaus road with them, even though they do not perceive who it is that is by their side. When our Quaker friends quote from the Johannine prologue the verse about the Light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world, their translation may be faulty, but their doctrine is sound. And the goal of the missionary enterprise is to bring together the acknowledged Christ on the lips of the missionary and the latent Christ in the hearts of the people to whom he speaks, till the latter rise in joy to meet the former.

If now we survey the results of missionary work as a whole, we shall see that there have been two results, one aimed at and the other one that was not sought, that in fact we tried our best to prevent. The first is the formation in many countries of an indigenous church with a ministry largely

recruited from its own people. Such churches keep fellowship with Christians overseas while sharing fully in the life of their own nation. Our hope for the Christian cause in China today is that the Church there is now strong enough and wise enough to meet its crisis successfully, even though it must do so without any help from us except that of prayer. I have known Christian leaders and rank-and-file members in several countries who were of fine spiritual quality and with whom one was proud to be associated. To dismiss such people as "rice Christians" is merely to betray one's ignorance.

The other result, the unexpected one, is that Christ has entered now in some measure into all the great non-Christian religions. The influence of the New Testament on Gandhi is well known: many of us saw a manifestation of the Cross in his identification with the pariah element in India and his death at the hands of a fanatic who hated him for his attempt to reconcile Hindu and Moslem. I knew personally a Japanese Buddhist for whom "Christlike" was the natural epithet: indeed, a Japanese woman, head of a school in Osaka, told me that she had become a Christian through contact with him. We did not work for this, but can we refuse it now that it has come about? We can do no other than see in it the will of God and a rebuke to our shortcomings. It almost seems as though our witness to Christ is so pitifully inadequate that he can speak to the hearts of some men better if they remain in their own tradition than he could if they abandoned it for ours.

So far I have spoken in general terms of the East, stretching that term so as to cover Africa also. But we do not live merely in the world, we live at a particular point of time in which particular tasks are committed to us. I wish therefore to say something of two countries with which I happen to be to some extent familiar.

The first is British West Africa. From the point of view of religion the population there can be divided into Pagan, Moslem, and Christian. As education extends and eventually becomes universal, it is difficult to believe that the pagan cults will maintain themselves. The product of a government secondary school, if he is to have a religion, will be either Moslem or Christian. There is, as it were, a race between the Bible and the Koran. Does it matter which of them wins?

If you ask me that question as one who is interested in the future development of the country, I answer that it does. Islam in West Africa sets little value on education and has not learned to recognize the worth of woman. If you ask the question of me again, this time as a Christian, I reply that, with all due respect for the prophet of Arabia, I could not be

content that he should be the figure to whom millions turn rather than Christ.

The second country is Japan. I have an intense admiration for Japan and her religious history. Indeed, it has long seemed to me that Japanese Buddhism might well rank higher in our estimation than Indian religion. Her people have much to offer us. Yet in the past they have been gravely misled, and the latest news to reach me from Tokyo is of a return to the old mentality, including veneration of the Imperial family, on the part of many. Japan needs to surrender the ideals by which she lived for centuries, to abjure once for all the preposterous Shinto mythology and its tribal morality. There is no health for her and no security in the Pacific so long as she continues to put the techniques of an industrial civilization at the service of a picturesque but narrow and stunting tradition.

One of the few writers who have the courage to say outright what Japan needs is D. J. Enright in *The World of Dew*.<sup>1</sup> He speaks frankly on such topics as the status, or rather lack of status, accorded to women in Japan, of the heartlessness and brutality that lurk behind some of those features of Japanese life that prompt the tourist to rapturous praise. Japan needs to be born again. Nothing less will suffice. Of course, we of the West cannot ourselves attack the center of Japanese life. But there is a vigorous church in that country, and if we are asked to help them in their effort for the soul of their people, what right have we to refuse?

On looking back on what has been said so far, it strikes me as somewhat unrealistic. Perhaps the question is not whether the West *shall* evangelize the East, but *how* it shall do so. There are many who are determined that, whether Asia and Africa want these things or not, they shall have our films and our hair styles, our illustrated magazines and our scandal stories. It is not the missionary who is persuading the people to forsake the old ways and weakening the hold of the ancient faiths. These things are being done, quite ruthlessly, by those high priests of secular evangelism, the advertising agent, and the high-pressure salesman.

At the lowest level, if so much of the world is to have our style of life forced upon it without so much as a by-your-leave, are we content that its people should know only of the worst and the third-rate, and never hear of the best? And at the highest level, while so many voices speak to men's confusion, are those only who tell of Christ and his guidance to be silent?

<sup>1</sup> Enright, D. J., *The World of Dew: Aspects of Living Japan*. Secker and Warburg; or The British Book Service, New York, 1955.

# *A Pastor's First Year of Counseling*

SAMUEL SOUTHARD

RECENTLY I SERVED my first year as a pastor in a high middle-class suburban church, and had certain experiences with counseling which I would like to share with others. This pastorate had no connection with my present work at the Texas Medical Center, and was indeed located in another state. In order to avoid identification of parishioners mentioned in this article, the locale is not given, and the details of case histories have been disguised.

After that year's work, I have come to one definite conclusion: the first year of pastoral work is the introductory chapter for a volume of experiences in counseling. In that time I laid a foundation of general visitation upon which secure relationships were being built with my people.

When emergencies arose, such as the sudden panic of illness, death, or personal failure, my previous knowledge of the sufferer as a healthy, happy individual in his own home was a steadying influence to both of us. When complex confessions and deep feelings poured out in counseling, I was often able to clarify them through my acquaintance with this parishioner in his home or our church.

This conclusion about the introductory nature of one year's work came out of an analysis of the types of personal problems which parishioners presented to me within that time. Although I was privileged to minister to my people concerning a wide variety of needs, I found myself standing upon the threshold of deeper and more heart-rending difficulties. For example, less than five per cent of my counseling involved conflicts between husband and wife. Veteran pastors have told me that the majority of their counseling concerns marriage and family difficulties. Again, juvenile delinquency is a major community concern, yet only one per cent of my conversations with church people centered about "problem" children.

What I say here is both an introduction and an invitation. First, I want to emphasize the initial year of pastoral contacts as an introduction,

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a preparation and invitation for the people to discuss their deepest fears and desires with a pastor whom they learn to trust as years pass by. Secondly, I am inviting experienced pastors to state exactly what type of problems people bring to them in the second, the fifth, the tenth year of one pastorate. I am challenging men in a variety of churches to keep careful records year by year of their counseling and visitation and to put them into print. This article is only an introduction to the analysis of the personal needs of a congregation.

### I. THE PASTOR AND HIS CHURCH

The types of problems which people present to us in our first year are influenced both by our own personalities and by our church. The size of the church, the economic and social structure of the community, and the impact of secularism will condition counseling. Our own training and interests, length of pastorate, method of visitation and counseling, will also determine the types and depth of problems discussed. The church of which I was pastor had a membership of about 500 persons. It was in a suburban area in which the average family income was \$8,000 a year. This made several differences in the kinds of counseling which I could do.

First, the high economic level meant that no problems of acute financial distress were presented. Although our church tried to reach one unchurched family in the throes of poverty, it was an unsuccessful attempt. Two families discussed economic problems with me, but both passed through a temporary crisis to renewed solvency.

Economics also affected counseling in a more subtle fashion. Most of the persons who talked about physical or emotional distress had already seen their family physician or a specialist. The few who would not see a psychiatrist after it was recommended by a physician had to manufacture their own defense. They were financially able to do so, and lived in a fragmented culture where few would know whom they consulted. I was not called on to take members to see a doctor; instead, I often entered the picture after they had first sought other advice.

A second conditioning influence on counseling was the suburban secular atmosphere. The country club was established for years before any church appeared. Exclusiveness was rapidly broken down, however, by the rapid development of \$15,000 to \$40,000 home subdivisions after World War II. In the midst of a competitive society in which material symbols were the accepted criteria of success, my members reflected many

secular standards. They might allude to social drinking after they came to know me, but the mention of alcoholism was taboo unless it could no longer be hidden. Only one person, after telling me that she drank, wished to discuss the conflict which this caused with Christian commitment.

Although a secularized society may have inhibited my members on the subject of alcoholism, they felt free to discuss the equally heart-breaking subject of "nervous breakdowns." However, they often rationalized these as being the result of "driving myself too hard" or "worrying too much about the children." These things are acceptable—in moderation—to our society. But I had to be content with vague allusions to the deeper reasons for emotional disturbance. Only two of the nineteen persons who were or had been emotionally ill talked about the deep fears and hatreds, lusts and longings which surged within them.

I especially noticed the eroding influence of secularism in evangelistic visitation and family counseling. A prospective member might in his own mind be devoted to his family, but would be almost completely obsessed with economic and professional advancement. He had time for neither the church nor his children. Believing wives might say to me, "If we could only interest him in the church he might show more interest in the children also." These were "good" fathers; men who would never be drunk before their family or beat their children. They provided the home with everything but their own presence. Let each man see to his own conscience!

Mothers seldom spoke about problems of pietism in rearing their children. Drinking, dancing, smoking, dating were handled according to prevailing class mores or personal religious conviction. I was not called in as a moral arbiter or judge concerning legalistic questions of conduct. My people raised few questions about their children's playmates from a religious point of view, since religion was often considered a "private" matter.

My role as pastor was more positive when the question of church membership arose. At this one point I learned more about family structure than at any other; in talking about their child's decision parents would reveal the degree of independent thinking they allowed the child, give me an idea of the clearness of communication between parent and child, and often discuss the all-important question of "who wears the pants" in the family.

Along with economic and social factors, my own personality was an

influence upon the type of problems presented. In fact, it might easily be the major problem! I had been trained in pastoral care on a graduate level and had been a supervising chaplain in a mental hospital. I believed that pastoral psychology should be a part of the total work of the minister and that pastoral counseling should begin in home visitation. Therefore I spent little time in the office except for prearranged conferences.

By following this philosophy of visiting all the people, whether healthy or sick, I reached 75 per cent of the 190 homes in the church membership during my first year. Some persons were reached at home, some in the hospital, some in the church study. The total number of calls which I recorded during the first year were as follows:

- 153 home visits of "well" members.
- 80 home or hospital visits of the sick,  
members and prospects.
- 54 office counseling sessions.
- 46 home visits to prospects.

I officiated at three weddings and three funerals during this time.

Since most of these contacts were in the home or hospital, I had little concern about my office or the interior furnishings. However, the church secretary followed a rigorous schedule in making my appointments, either in the home or office, so that no family would be missed. I certainly did not achieve Richard Baxter's triumph of 800 systematic family calls a year, but Baxter was my model.

In summary, the size and environment of the church made it relatively easy for me to have some discussion with most resident members during this first year. My own desire to do this placed counseling within the context of pastoral care rather than separating it as a specialty for the abnormal. I was introduced to the membership and the foundation was laid for the future deepening of many relationships.

## II. THE PROBLEMS PRESENTED BY PARISHIONERS

Anton Boisen classified people from the standpoint of pastoral counseling in six groups: the faithful, the careless, the difficult, the distressed, the pagan, the down-and-out.<sup>1</sup> Boisen's classifications will be modified in this article. The 200 persons with whom I talked privately from fifteen minutes to one hour are grouped as follows:

<sup>1</sup> Boisen, A., *Problems in Religion and Life*, The Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1946, pp. 36-37.

<i>Classification</i>	<i>Number of Persons</i>	<i>Percent of Total</i>
Prospects	43	21
The Growing	25	13
The Faithful	21	10
The Careless	10	5
The Distressed	77	39
The Isolated	12	6

It is immediately evident from these figures that almost half of the persons contacted (45 per cent) "had a problem." These were the "distressed" (39 per cent), and the "isolated" (6 per cent). Since I majored on routine home visitation and had personal contacts with 75 per cent of the congregation, it seems reasonable to conclude that about half of the church members had personal problems which were evident or which they were willing to discuss with me during my first year.

A word of caution is necessary. There is a distinction between "exegesis" and "eisegesis" also in the study of personality. As a young pastor, like some beginning medical students, I was sometimes tempted to think that my visit was unsuccessful until I should find some psychic or spiritual pathology in the parishioner. But this is often eisegesis; I was reading into the normal concerns of persons those meanings which were appropriate for my previous experience with the mentally ill. I therefore concentrated on personality *exegesis*; that is, careful attention to what the parishioner actually said, sensitivity to the undercurrent of meaning, and some awareness of the relation of this particular conversation to his total life pattern. As soon as I made this decision, I was overjoyed by the opportunity of visiting parishioners who handled the crises of life in good health. As I see it, the challenge to clinically-trained pastors is to be alert to human need without a predetermined expectation that everyone should be sick in some way.

#### *A. Prospects.*

Yet I went to one group with predetermined expectations. These were the prospects for church membership. In this group of forty-three persons I focused on one major issue: their relation to Christ and to the church. I did not shut out other problems, for many personality difficulties emerged; but the basic intention of my visit was to bring them to a profession of faith or church membership.

Two conclusions stand out in my mind about these people. The first

one is heartening: techniques of pastoral counseling can be applied fruitfully in visitation evangelism. In discussing a child's decision for Christ both with the child and with the parents, my sensitivity to the family structure was important. For example, a father did not wish his son to "be emotional and hurry into a decision." My assurance that the child had done well intellectually in a catechetical class for two months did not alter the father's fear. However, when I encouraged him to speak of his own conversion, the father said: "I was very emotional when I joined the church. I was scared of everything and everybody. I turned around and looked to see if my mother would nod permission for me to go to the altar during the invitation hymn. She did. She made all decisions for me. I have never really trusted myself, even today. I don't want Robert to be that way." In reply, I suggested that Robert might see things just a little differently than his father. In fact, Robert's decision to go through a two months' course before joining the church would be evidence of the steadiness of his purpose. Furthermore, inclusion in the Christian fellowship has been a stabilizing influence on the father; could it not also aid the son in his emotional growth?

The father returned on other occasions to talk about his own conflicts. Nothing more was said about Robert's decision, but during these series of conferences with the father, Robert joined the church.

A knowledge of family relationships is also helpful when children do *not* join the church. An entire family, including a grandfather, had been attending church regularly for a year when Margie, the oldest girl, talked to me about becoming a Christian. The mother told me that she wished to transfer her membership when the daughter joined. The father also spoke about transferring his membership, but with the qualification, "I guess this will set well with grandpa." Apparently it did not, for on the following Sunday I observed the family standing in a group, with the grandfather, outside church. As I approached the mother said, "How do you like this! We're all ready to join, but my husband has backed out at the last minute." The husband replied: "Why, I'm waiting to take in another member with me—grandpa. But he's not ready to join yet."

The husband's refusal ran deeper than "stubbornness." In my visit to the home and the office, it was apparent that the grandfather subtly controlled both the family business in which he had most of the stock, and the business of rearing his grandchildren. The husband was not just being challenged to join the church; he was confronted with a family decision which ran contrary to his father's wishes.

The second fact from this study of prospective members is disheartening. I was less careful in keeping records on them than on any other group of persons with whom I talked! This was especially true of conversations with children. The reason for this neglect is not entirely clear, but it seems to be a characteristic of men trained in pastoral counseling. Although there is a flood of "how to do it" books in the solution of personal problems, I am not acquainted with any recent books, or sections of a book, that present case material on evangelism from the point of view of pastoral psychology.

### *B. The Growing.*

There is another group—13 per cent of the total—which includes children who were already church members, young people, engaged couples, newlyweds, and new mothers.

The first thing I found when I dealt with these was that the first year's work is really just an introduction. Only one child talked to me about a personal problem. It takes a long time, I found, for a new pastor to know his children, and for them to know him well enough to talk freely about their deeper emotional strivings. According to the testimony of parents, I had a good relationship with those children who talked with me about church membership; but that is a subject which children can discuss with a minister with some hope that they will be accepted and understood. Since I know no one except Dr. Lewis J. Sherrill who has written clinically on the pastoral care of children, I offer the conclusion that my first year of pastoral care laid a silent foundation with children. Some other pastor will have to write down what it produces in his second, fifth, and tenth year of ministry.

There is another conclusion about the "growing." Some of the most productive and deeper-level counseling of the first year is done with the young people of the church. Over half of those in the "growing" group were young people who discussed, in from one to six interviews, such problems as vocation, ostracism from a social group, conflict of Christian with group standards, fear of psychotic episodes, emancipation from parents, depression or concern for a divorced parent.

Young persons are looking for someone with whom they can counsel. They make ready identifications with a pastor and immediately plunge into a discussion of their concerns. For example, a high-school girl whom I invited to visit me before going to college, came to her appointment on time and began to ask how she could persuade her father to let her enter the field of dramatics. She discussed her desire to be accepted by her



father although she resented his protectiveness. She had talked frankly about this with a favored brother, who said, "Well, it's different with boys." All of this was spontaneous. My only comment was to ask if she might have shown sufficient dependency to warrant her father's overprotective attitude. Now that she had said all this, was she willing to make plans, carry through, and take the consequences of an independent decision?

It seems to me that young people are more willing than older persons to return for further interviews. Maybe this is because they seem to "work at" their problems during the counseling and feel that they are "getting somewhere." For example, one girl spent five interviews trying to uncover, accept, and manage her contradictory strivings to remain a little girl under the protection of her mother and yet grow into responsible adulthood. Again, a boy used three separate hours to unfold the events in his community and home that led him to distrust people.

In neither case was my work complete. The girl still faces specific crises which challenge her new resolve to be emotionally independent. If I see her three years from now when she wishes to discuss wedding plans, then we could measure her growth over a period of time. Out of our background over the years we could discuss the role of the parents in this marriage. The boy who distrusted people is just beginning to feel safe talking to one adult. He said, "I don't know why I've told you all this. I guess you have to trust somebody sometime." He will need to test this new relationship with me many times. But I also have another task, which is to lead him from trust in one man to confidence in a group of people, the Christian community.

So although my counseling with some young people reached deep levels of feeling, it was still only a foundation for their future personal growth and development.

Several engaged or newly-wed couples came to me. It is self-evident that this kind of counseling is only a prelude to other significant ventures in marriage, vocation, parenthood, sickness, or personal failure. I remember one young man, Murray, who first talked to me about choosing a vocation. Six months later he came back to talk about arguments between parents in which he tried to act as the eternal mediator. Three months later he came to the church study with his fiancée. During several premarital interviews they talked about their families. Murray still held to his former way of life; now it took the form of trying to reconcile his father with the prospective daughter-in-law. When Murray conquered his anxiety enough simply to announce their engagement, he was surprised at his

parent's acceptance. However, a month after I performed the marriage, the couple returned to discuss tensions between in-laws. Since Murray again talked of being the go-between, I used our previous conversations to show how this was a continuation of an earlier reaction pattern which would have to be modified if his marriage was to be successful.

So with Murray, what began as vocational counseling led to a continuing and deeper relationship as he faced courtship and marriage.

### *C. The Faithful.*

Then there are those "faithful" members who are regular and responsible in their church work. The 10 per cent classified here as "faithful" are those regular members who manifested no personal problems (8 per cent) or who showed them only in relation to the work of the church (2 per cent). There were of course many more faithful members, but since they were visited when sick or in distress, they are listed under other categories.

Although the number of the faithful who did not seek counsel was small (10 per cent), I can testify that they were a significant and refreshing group. As a new pastor, I drew strength from them and learned much from identifying with their attitudes. These people were frank to discuss church policy and offer suggestions by which I could avoid difficulties.

But here again the limitation of one year's work is apparent. One year is simply not enough time to develop and train these people as "lay" pastors. In my opinion, the actual practice of "the priesthood of believers" is one of the most significant and untouched opportunities of the church today. Laymen can minister effectively to each other in time of crisis. They bring skills from their own work, a broad knowledge of the community, intimate contact with many families, and the maturity of age which a young pastor does not possess. In time they could be transformed into a real diaconate which would minister to the spiritual and emotional needs of the congregation. But it cannot be achieved rapidly in the first year of a pastorate. These persons must be picked with care.

There is a note of caution in this last sentence because 2 per cent of the "faithful" came into conflict with me or with certain groups in the church, or both. The congregation described these people as hostile. They were spoken of as persons who "always talk you down," "always seem to be mad at somebody," "keep talking about how much better it was done in their church back home." As a result, these "faithful" persons found the

normal rewards of responsible church work denied them, because various groups resented their criticism and attempts to "run things their way."

From my point of view, the characteristic of many "faithful in conflict" seemed to be that church activity provided them with the most satisfactory solution to their personal problems. I believe that they needed to have some significant way of self-expression in the Christian fellowship. Who would not need it when beset with guilt over past infidelity, or filled with frustration at home and hatred of children now beyond domination? Ways of relating to people which were early conditioned by the alcoholism of a loved one or rivalry with a favored sibling do not change quickly. It is dangerous to assume that everyone who doesn't fit perfectly into our new plans for the church is a "problem child." However, when some people irritate many different kinds of groups in the church and repeat the same fixed ideas over and over, then I think pastors should listen carefully for some underlying difficulty.

In my first year, I could only begin to care for these faithful members. First, I refused to be used by them or anybody else in organizational schemes. Instead, I suggested that they talk with the laymen responsible for that phase of church work, not just to "get them off my neck," but to encourage their contacts with other members and demonstrate my sincere support of lay leadership. Secondly, I tried to interpret the Christian fellowship again and again in terms of higher goals to which all groups may aspire, and in which they might have a significant part. Maybe in time this will guide the "faithful in conflict" toward acceptable ways of communicating with others. In some cases it worked. It was also a repeated challenge to give up their defensive stereotypes in order that their real talents may be used and affection released toward them by the group. The key to this type of reaction was reached with one faithful member when he said, "I have always believed that the world was against me, but I feel comfortable in the church. I guess this is the one place where I can learn to live decently, since I love what I do here and you'll listen seriously to my problems."

#### *D. The Careless.*

There were many "careless" persons in the congregation whom I visited when they were ill or in distress. But the 5 per cent considered here as "careless" are those who were both indifferent to the church and unaware of any personal problems. These were the persons who "were too busy

to come to church," "don't want to go to church with those hypocrites," "wouldn't want to offend my Catholic husband," "try to live right and do right and think that religion is a personal matter," "hate to go to church because people always speak to you."

Such a variety of responses indicates the wide range of attitudes met in this "careless" group. Sometimes I could see their underlying, unspoken problems which came to the surface as I visited them. For example, the person who was "always out of town" had been in furious conflict with a former pastor who spoke against gambling and drinking. The root of his resentment came out in the following tirade: "That shyster preacher doesn't know a thing about religion. My father is the most religious man I ever knew. He told me, 'Son, a little drink won't hurt you.' My father was always right. I've become rich by following in his footsteps. No preacher is going to tell *me* what's right and wrong!"

If the former pastor had been for drink, and the father had been against it, I believe that the emotional reaction of the son would have been the same. The father was god, who gave this man wealth, success, and security. Any questioning of the father-idol was sacrilege.

There was a curious dilemma in the woman who said, "I hate to go to church because people always speak to you." She wanted to hear sermons that would "do her good" without admitting her need for human companionship. This unhappy lady had been catapulted from the bottom of the social ladder to the top in five years by a husband who worked night and day to keep them upon such a precarious perch. Set in the midst of a "sophisticated" society for which she was not trained, she was denied the support of her husband who was consumed with anxiety lest he "go under" in his new managerial position.

Since an initial contact was made with these persons during my first year, they may come into the Christian fellowship later if they think of me in a time of crisis. I believe my reputation with the careless can be established by the way in which I minister to a member of their family at death. A compassionate funeral sermon for one member of the family may open the door to life in the church for another.

#### *E. The Distressed.*

The largest portion of my counseling and visitation was with the distressed (39 per cent). Less than 20 per cent of these distressed persons were seen in hospitals. On the other hand, persons placed in different

classifications might be seen in hospitals, such as maternity cases which are part of "the growing."

I subdivided the problems presented by those who knew they were in distress into the following groups:

Physically ill .....	23
(short-term—15)	
(chronic—8)	
Emotionally ill .....	19
Bereaved .....	11
(immediate—9)	
(delayed—2)	
Aged and lonely .....	11
Husband-wife conflict .....	9
Parent-child problem .....	2
Alcoholism .....	2

The introductory nature of the first year's work can be seen in these figures. Some veteran pastors say (but they have not written clinical summaries) that the greater part of their counseling concerns husband-wife conflicts. This was just beginning to be a factor in my first year's ministry. Also, parent-child and alcoholic problems loom large in modern society, but they were seldom discussed with me in the beginning of my work.

I was concerned about the large number of emotionally ill persons encountered in a year. These ranged from persons who were agitated and depressed for a week, to former mental patients labeled "chronic schizophrenia, paranoid type." Three persons were nervous and agitated for a short period of time following the pressure of illness or separation in the family; four had periodic depressions which did not require hospitalization; four had been hospitalized during agitated depressions; two had been hospitalized for schizophrenic episodes; three presented signs of mental illness in their chronic unrealistic suspicions and hostility of persons; three were so double-minded and full of sexual and social conflicts that they might be suffering from character neuroses.

My present role was thrown into bold relief against my previous experience as a mental hospital chaplain. The major problems of a pastor with mentally ill persons differ from those of a chaplain. As a pastor I

worked mainly with the family, interpreting the nature of the illness, reassuring them, persuading them that their loved one should be hospitalized, preparing them to receive that one home again. My concern for the mentally ill person centered around his therapeutic entry into a hospital or diagnostic center, support during therapy, and aid in readjustment to his home and community when illness subsided. This was quite different from my experiences as a chaplain; then I ministered to the family occasionally and to the patient intensively during the acute phase of his illness.

As I looked for literature specifically for pastors on the clinical management of mental disturbances in the parish, I found it is almost nonexistent. This is understandable, since psychiatrists themselves are just beginning to write of dealing with the family as part of the care of those who are or have been mentally ill.

Counseling with these disturbed persons showed me both the advantages and weaknesses of current training programs in pastoral care. I felt fairly well prepared to explain hospitalization admission procedures, the signs of acute mental illness, and general principles of mental health. My clinical training had been in mental and general hospitals. I was ill prepared to begin therapy with persons suffering a character neurosis, since I had only a few months of postgraduate counseling experience with persons labeled "neurotic." Perhaps it was fortunate that I had little specific marriage-and-family counseling my first year, for I had only one course on that subject in graduate school. Most clinical training is now given in mental hospitals or correctional institutions, where trained chaplains can supervise students. Now that the seminary trend is toward clinically-trained professors, it is time to think of training that will equip theological students for marriage-and-family counseling.

In the realm of physical illness, I was most often confronted with diseases of the circulatory system. Six of the eight chronically ill persons whom I consistently visited suffered from such disease, either as a "heart attack" or "high blood pressure." The relationship of this to a man's way of life has been discussed in psychosomatic medicine, but who has taught the pastor what to say to such people? Several persons who had suffered heart attacks told me to "take men by the shoulders and shake them when they drive themselves too hard." They felt that I had more right to do this than anyone else, since ministers represent the ultimate realities of life and death, as well as the temporal responsibility to live a wise and balanced life. But how many of us in the ministry live a balanced life of work and play, love and worship?



*F. The Isolated.*

A discussion of pastoral care would not be complete without attention to the sheep who had strayed far from the fold. These were the isolated—6 per cent of the total. Although many more in this category went undiscovered because of the limitations and philosophy of my first year's work, a certain portion of them came immediately to my attention. These were members of the church who began to return when the new pastor arrived, but still felt the past rejection of the church, or harbored hostility toward some persons now dominant in the church leadership.

One such person had led the opposition to a new building program in years past. He made his views known to me on several occasions, but without belligerence. As he expressed it, "We made a mistake in not staying with the last preacher even when we opposed him. We'll work with you if you want us." I told him that if he wished to be a progressive and respected leader, he should know the best and most successful thinking on church administration. The best professional thinking in the field, I said, had discovered that a first-class building program often opened the bottleneck of growth in a cramped church. I cited various examples and facts. Having received this evidence, the layman nodded and began to speak of his personal life in such terms as: "All of us make mistakes, and I've made mine. But I can work with a preacher who doesn't always make me feel like the worst sinner in the crowd."

The challenge, as I saw it, was to suggest certain conditions by which this layman could again be accepted in the group, provide him with useful information, and let him know that his obvious leadership talents were greatly needed *if* he worked for the good of the total church.

We made some progress in this situation during my first year. The layman was a natural leader who brought a number of his friends back into the church. During the drive for a new building he said in a business meeting: "I made some mistakes in years past. I have better information now. I hope that you'll vote for this building, but not because I say so. Forget about me and what I've said in the past, and let's work together on this drive."

The foundations of that building have already been laid.

# Vital Interaction: Scripture and Experience

John Wesley's Doctrine of Authority

R. BENJAMIN GARRISON

"LET ME BE *homo unius libri*," said John Wesley in the preface to his very first volume of sermons. These words characterize at once the man, his spirit at its best, and the movement that bears his name. For as soon as it was mined and smelted, the Wesleyan iron was placed in the fire of an affirmative revival of Scriptural Christianity, a fire in constant danger of being put out by the dampening rationalistic deism which surrounded it. Taking the one Book, Wesleyanism declared, "Here is good news from God."<sup>1</sup>

Much of the discussion about what was the final authority for Wesley, Scripture or experience, goes astray at just this point: Wesley brought severe Scriptural tests to bear upon any alleged religious experience; however, Scripture is itself a book of experiences. Any failure to recognize this truth, implicit in all of Wesley's thinking, will inevitably cause him to be misinterpreted. For the Bible is pre-eminently, indeed primarily and uniquely, a book which records the Godward experiences of men<sup>2</sup> and the manward experience of God. It is the story of men who have *heard* a great voice out of heaven,<sup>3</sup> who have seen the beckoning to *come* to Him who gives rest,<sup>4</sup> who have *taken up* their Cross and followed.<sup>5</sup>

It is not, therefore, a question of *either* Scripture *or* experience. Rather, it is a fact of vital interaction between the two. A very typical Wesleyan phrase is: "All experience, as well as Scripture, show. . . ." <sup>6</sup> Scriptural

<sup>1</sup> Defying thereby that deism which declared in effect "there was no news from God," as Bishop McConnell has suggested. That this fire burned and spread is all the more amazing when we consider that nearly the entire temper of the times was set by this deism.

<sup>2</sup> As well as the flights from Him.

<sup>3</sup> Rev. 21:3.

<sup>4</sup> Matt. 11:28.

<sup>5</sup> Luke 9:2.

<sup>6</sup> Wesley, J., *Sermons*, New York, Emory and Waugh, 1831. "Working Out Our Own Salvation," Vol. II, p. 236.

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truth is vitally true only when it becomes true for me. My experience can be adjudged ultimately trustworthy only when gauged in the light of Scripture. What is involved here is "a divine *evidence* and *conviction*, not only that 'God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself,' but also that Christ loves *me*, and gave himself for *me*."<sup>7</sup>

Thus the basis of the Scripture's authority is: "Other foundation can no man lay, than that which is laid, even Jesus Christ."<sup>8</sup> By experience we build upon that foundation, judging tradition (the record of other men's experiences of the New Testament experience) in the light of reason.

### I. THE WORD

Wesley's teaching relative to the authority of the Scripture is more by implication than by explication. He seldom states it as such: we must deduce it by indirection from such phrases as "I have no authority from the word of God, 'to judge those that are without,'"<sup>9</sup> and from myriads of similar statements.

There can be no question, however, that Wesley believed his teachings to have Biblical foundation and validity. As he said, when the heat of controversy was beginning to increase, "If I am a heretic, I became such by reading the Bible."<sup>10</sup>

Thus all doctrine, and in particular the doctrine of perfect love, is referred to Jesus Christ. In his *A Plain Account of Christian Perfection* the author says that this doctrine is "His doctrine, peculiarly, emphatically His."<sup>11</sup> When he inseparably connects perfection to love, he does so on what he considers unimpeachable Scriptural foundations. No term in the Bible can claim a nobler title than can "love." Even the two supreme commandments are geared to it.

The principle of Scriptural interpretation, somewhat amazing when we remember that Wesley lived in precritical times, is the familiar Reformation one of "interpreting Scripture by Scripture, according to the analogy of faith."<sup>12</sup> Text is to be measured by context; what God says in this place is to be listened to with an ear to what he said in that place; the whole word of God is to be preached.

This interpretive principle can be seen in Wesley's whole-minded

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, "The Scripture Way of Salvation," Vol. I, p. 387.

<sup>8</sup> I Cor. 3:11.

<sup>9</sup> *Sermons*, "Living Without God," Vol. II, p. 485.

<sup>10</sup> Wesley, J., *Letters*, Ed. by John Telford, London: The Epworth Press, 1931. Vol. IV, p. 216.

<sup>11</sup> New York: Lane & Tippet, 1843, p. 132.

<sup>12</sup> *Sermons*, "The New Creation," Vol. II, p. 82.

rejection of Calvinistic predestinarianism. Even if the Genevan giant could be acquitted of the charge of *eisegesis* (and I am not sure that Wesley would find him not guilty), still his *exegesis* is faulty, Wesley says, because he isolates a few passages, building too much out of too little.<sup>13</sup> So in his sermon on "Free Grace" Wesley labeled this dogma a "horrible decree of predestination!" The italics are *his*, as is the exclamation point. "And here," he said, "I fix my foot."<sup>14</sup> For

there are many scriptures, the true sense whereof neither you nor I shall know, till death is swallowed up in victory. But this I know, better it were to say it had no sense at all, than to say it had such a sense as this. It cannot mean, whatever it mean besides, that the God of truth is a liar. Let it mean what it will, it cannot mean that the Judge of all the world is unjust. No scripture can mean that God is not love, or that his mercy is not over all his works. . . .<sup>15</sup>

Scripture is to be interpreted by Scripture.

But it is also to be interpreted "according to the analogy of faith." Here is the principle by which experience is to be judged. Faith as an abstraction is not faith. Faith is and must be *the faith of a faithful man*, that is, of a man who has experienced what the Scripture reveals. Professor Edwin Lewis used to be fond of saying, "Where one stands determines ultimately what one sees." The Cross may be both judgment and deliverance, wrath and love, but which it is predominantly and principally will depend upon whether we stand beneath it in faith or rail at it in unbelief. Faith gives a man eyes to see. Only with those eyes, only by "the analogy of faith," can he be sure that what he sees, whether in himself or in his Bible, is not an illusion.

Hence it is only in terms of such vital interaction that one can understand the position stated by Wesley in the controversy which gave rise to his famous "The world is my parish" statement: "I allow no other rule, whether of faith or practice, than the Holy Scriptures. . . ." <sup>16</sup>

## II. EXPERIENCE

The recognition of this vital interaction does not free one, however, from taking a position relative to the importance of experience to Wesley. His interpreters, even while disagreeing in their respective interpretations,

<sup>13</sup> However there is considerable evidence that it was the Calvinists, rather more than Calvin himself, who did this. The doctrine of predestination occupies far less space in the earlier editions of the *Institutes* than it does in the later, controversy-expanded editions.

<sup>14</sup> *Sermons*, "Free Grace," Vol. I, p. 488.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 488-9.

<sup>16</sup> *Letters*, Vol. I, p. 284.

have to a man agreed on the plenary importance of experience to him and hence to an understanding of him. W. E. Sangster, to take an instance, has written:

When his opponents, stressing the utter pollution of human nature, insisted that there was sin in everything that everybody did, he usually left the controversy to his lieutenants but bent his own strength to raising up a spiritual community of people who would authenticate, in their own lives, the promise of and the teaching of the Apostle. He believed that the argument could best be rebutted that way.<sup>17</sup>

Indeed, one must take a stand here not only because of the obvious and signal importance of experience in an understanding of Wesley, but also because of its less obvious but no less signal importance to religion of any stripe. Dr. Tillich made this clear when he wrote:

We are grasped, in the experience of faith, by the unapproachably holy which is the ground of our being and breaks into our existence and which judges us and heals us. This is "crisis" and "grace" at the same time. Crisis in the theological sense is as much a matter of faith as grace is. To describe the crisis as something immanent, open for everybody at any time, and grace as something transcendent, closed to everybody and to be accepted only by a personal decision, is bad theology. Neither crisis nor grace is in our reach, neither grace nor crisis is beyond a possible experience. . . . But it becomes "crisis" in the religious sense, i.e., judgment, only in unity with the experience of grace.<sup>18</sup>

One does not have to accept all the theological explications here (certainly Wesley would not), to understand that Dr. Tillich is pointing to the towering importance of religious experience, whether interpreted in a Tillichian manner or not.

Again, Arnold Lunn is pointing to the importance of experience when he writes that the "philosophy of a religion must be deduced from experience."<sup>19</sup> So most "people . . . may take their official belief from the Church, but the beliefs which give reality to their inner life are based on personal experience."<sup>20</sup>

Frederick W. Robertson put it thusly:

How shall we recognize truth Divine? What is the test by which we shall know whether it comes from God or not? They tell us we know Christ to be from God because He wrought miracles; we know a doctrine to be from God because we find it written; or because it is sustained by a universal consent of fathers.

<sup>17</sup> Sangster, W. E., *The Path to Perfection*, The Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1943, p. 50. Sangster's book, by the way, has been sneered at as the work of a preacher who is no scholar. Maybe so, but precisely because he has preserved the pastor's heart, he is the better equipped to judge and understand Wesley at this point.

<sup>18</sup> Tillich, Paul, *The Protestant Era*, University of Chicago Press, 1948, pp. 78-79.

<sup>19</sup> Lunn, Arnold, *John Wesley*, New York: The Dial Press, 1939, p. 305.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 157.

That is—for observe what this argument implies—there is something more evident than truth! Truth cannot prove itself: we want something else to prove. . . . Now to say so is to say that you cannot be sure that it is midday or morning sunshine unless you look at the sundial. . . . Now Christ says "My sheep know *me*." Wisdom is justified by her children. Not by some lengthened investigation, whether the shepherd's dress be the identical dress, and the staff and the crozier genuine, do the sheep recognize the shepherd. They know *Him*, they hear his voice, they know him as a man knows his friend. . . .

Simple men . . . knew very little of antiquity, church authority, and shadows of coming events which prophecy casts before; but their eyes saw the light, and their hearts felt the present God. . . . "One thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see."<sup>21</sup>

Most fair-minded men are prepared to grant the crucial importance of religious experience.

But only by taking cognizance of the interplay of factors both experiential and Scriptural, in some manner similar to what I have here called "vital interaction," will we be saved from the errors of relativism and pragmatism.

Wesley's thought is subject to the charge of relativism only in the sense that, as we have said, truth is not vital until it becomes *related* to me. And his thought is pragmatic in method only. One may attempt to find truth by experimenting to discover what works. One cannot conclude, on Wesley's logic, that "workability," "experienceability," is the sole criterion for truth.

For one's experience is always standing alongside an objective "over-againstness" in the form of the Holy Scriptures. These Scriptures clearly show, as Professor Cell contended, that "in religion, experience and reality come to the same thing. . . . With Wesley the first and last word about Christian experience is never the human receptivity nor the historical mediation. It is always the divine gift. . . ." <sup>22</sup> Wesley would have thought an exclusively utilitarian religion to be sorely lacking in usefulness and completely bereft of religion.

He would have been one of the first to attack modern pragmatism as the essence of untruth. He would have been one of the first to remind its proponents that a thing works because it is true, and to deny that it is necessarily true because it works.

One could have much to say about the place of the Holy Spirit in the doctrine of Scripture-experience. But here we will note only that the witness of the Spirit is the objective manifestation of truth, the witness of my spirit

<sup>21</sup> Robertson, Frederick W., *Sermons*. Harper & Brothers, 77th Anniversary Edition, pp. 411-413.

<sup>22</sup> Cell, Geo. Croft, *The Rediscovery of John Wesley*. Henry Holt & Co., 1935, p. 20.



its subjective manifestation—always remembering that subject requires object, and conversely.

When one studies the New Testament records of the early Church, especially in the Acts of the Apostles, one quickly sees that Wesley's teaching wears the togas of the Book Divine. When the circumcision party was employing every tactical and logical weapon at its command against the Petrine party's new practice of preaching the gospel even to the hated Gentiles, it found itself suddenly reduced to only the merest murmur of argument by two factors: (1) Peter was preaching that any man could be subject to the saving grace through faith; (2) But also the results were showing up in human lives: the hated Gentiles were *evidencing* God's work among them. The proclamation was the objective ground of the experience; that experience was the subjective validation of the proclamation's truth. A vital interaction existed between the two. This was Wesley's starting point.

He is saying that our experience of reality is the highest authority for it. Experience may be erroneous, and as such may require correction, but it is not expendable. "Existential thinking is experiential thinking."<sup>23</sup>

As Professor Cell has pointed out,<sup>24</sup> this approach was one *in principle* with that of Arminianism. But whereas the Arminian response was primarily intellectual (and thus implied its own definition of faith), Wesley's was a total, personal response. Here the Oxford Methodist's father unquestionably influenced his son: the older Wesley said, "The inward witness, Son, the inward witness, that is the proof, the strongest proof of Christianity."<sup>25</sup> This inward witness, continues Professor Cell, was for Wesley "a summary term for all those final and important intuitions of the Christian consciousness of which no further genetic account can be given." It is made up of "ultimate human responses."

Indeed, as is well known, Wesley did not restrict the authority of experience to spiritual matters alone. In a time when it was commonly believed that one would die without wine, he conducted inductive studies of alcohol and concluded on the basis of his experiments that distillers were wholesale murderers.

This is to be understood when Wesley speaks, in *A Plain Account*, of his "mild, loving examination"<sup>26</sup> of those who claimed, or whom others

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 83.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 87.

<sup>25</sup> Quoted by Prof. Cell, *ibid.*, p. 89.

<sup>26</sup> Wesley, J., *A Plain Account*, p. 85.

claimed, to have been blessed with the perfecting love of Christ. It was mild, usually; it was loving, always. But it was also an examination. Wesley the logician was there, challenging every major premise, looking beneath every minor premise, sniffing at every conclusion. Wesley the practical scientist was there, applying the rules of experiment in order to induce the most accurate possible results. Wesley the Greek scholar was there, bringing to bear the strictest Scriptural tests as if the person were a book applying to be admitted to the New Testament canon. He credited others with as much honesty as he possessed himself, and because of this his "results" were sometimes inaccurate. But his investigation was not slipshod.

If a man claimed to possess, and to be possessed by, perfect love. Wesley checked to see whether the claimant was longsuffering; whether Christian resignation was one of his attributes; whether he was always happy, gentle, temperate (even in his sleep!); whether he preferred comfortable preaching to a more rigorous, painful and honest sermon.<sup>27</sup> Hence he insists, "Humility and patience are the surest proofs of the increase of love."<sup>28</sup>

It is very important to say that the Epworthian's continual insistence upon the proof of fruit, upon the testimony of experience, comes out of the lofty importance of what the experience claims. If a man claims to have been possessed fully by the love of God, he may be either on the borders of heaven for his faith or on the edge of hell for his blasphemy. Proofs were needed, many proofs, and accurate ones. "In these circumstances, therefore, a direct testimony . . . is necessary in the highest degree."<sup>29</sup> Because Wesley feared God so fully, loved him so completely, believed him so trustingly, he advised his readers, "Do not hastily ascribe things to God."<sup>30</sup>

We have stated above that Scripture is judged by Wesley in the light of Scripture. It would also be fair to say that experience is judged in the light of experience (as well as in the light of Scripture). That is to say, one experience can be understood only in a total context of experiences. For instance, many of Wesley's interpreters have fallen into two main classes in relation to the famous Aldersgate experience: idolaters or iconoclasts. Such scholars could learn from psychology or from history that, important or unimportant, this day cannot be understood if separated from the days that went before and the days that followed, any more than the finest line in a poem can be cut from it without doing injury both to the poem and to the

<sup>27</sup> A canon that might be embarrassing today, to both pulpit and pew.

<sup>28</sup> *A Plain Account*, p. 156. This statement, incidentally, provides an illuminating evidence of the near-equation which existed in Wesley's mind between perfection and love.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 120.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 138.

line. Hence Wesley interprets a given experience in a total context of foregoing and subsequent ones.

Lecky claims that it was from Peter Bohler, the young Moravian graduate of Jena, that Wesley learned the necessity of complete confidence about one's salvation, so complete that one would experience not a single uneasy thought. But on the day following Aldersgate, John writes in his *Journal*: "The enemy injected a fear, 'If thou dost believe, why is there not a more sensible change?'" One surmises that this was not the only uneasy thought Wesley had as the years wore on. One also is sure that these thoughts were not lasting. But above all there is no evidence at all that Wesley judged May 24, 1738, without considering it in the light of May 25, and vice versa. Wesley examined all the elements before he named the compound. I am not here concerned with what significance Wesley attached to the Aldersgate experience. It probably weighed heavily in his scales. But it was not weighed alone. If Professor Cell was correct in claiming that Christian experience is "a summary term for all those final and important intuitions of the Christian consciousness," then certainly no single intuition, however important, can stand alone.

In fact, no single individual's experience, even *in toto*, can stand alone. As Lindström, Dimond, and others have clearly seen, for Wesley Christian experience is not simply that of the individual but it is also that of the fellowship: "Wesley taught men who were individualists in the originating centre of their thinking, to look beyond their own faith and fear to the one great witness of the universal Church in all ages."<sup>31</sup>

The total impact of Scripture upon the individual and the whole corroboration of Scripture by his experience, the vital interaction between the two, can be seen in another characteristic phrase in which these two polar authorities are cited in the same unconscious breath. In concluding his description of those who love God with all their hearts, Wesley says, "That is a point of fact; and this is plain, sound, Scriptural experience."<sup>32</sup>

It seems to the writer that, as regards the relationship between Scripture and experience, P. T. Forsyth has written words which Wesley would approvingly underscore. Wesley would agree that the appeal to experience is not sufficient in itself. He would probably agree that it is a corrective and that it is not normative. He would certainly insist with Forsyth that the

<sup>31</sup> Quoted by Lindström, Harald, *Wesley and Sanctification*, London: The Epworth Press, 1946, p. 6, note 7. For further discussion on this point, see the following section. (Lindström is quoting Dimond, S. G., *The Psychology of the Methodist Revival*, Oxford, 1926, p. 234.)

<sup>32</sup> *A Plain Account*, p. 116.

witness of the spirit must not be divorced from the witness of the Word. The content of the experience and the experience itself are both to be considered. "A real authority . . . is indeed *within* experience, but it is not the authority *of* experience, it is an authority *for* experience, it is an authority experienced."<sup>33</sup>

It ought to be clear by now (yet how many have misunderstood this!)<sup>34</sup> that Wesley does not mean by experience mere emotion, let alone emotionalism. The very severity of the tests which Wesley applied indicate also an open-mindedness which will not let the fact of emotion prejudge the validity of a particular experience. That Christian experience is, to quote Professor Cell again, "a summary term for all those final and important intuitions of the Christian consciousness" and not mere emotion, is indicated by an easily overlooked phrase in Wesley's sermon, "The Wilderness State."<sup>35</sup> He says: "How ready are we to believe that . . . because we *feel* no sin, we *have* none in us. . . ." This readiness he criticizes as unrealistic. As we have seen, *after* the experience severe ethical tests were applied, of which love was the chiefest.

### III. REASON AND TRADITION

In his preface to his *Works*,<sup>36</sup> Wesley expresses the hope that this presentation of his "maturest thoughts" to "serious and candid men" will be agreeable to "Scripture, Reason, and Christian Antiquity." The validity of what he had to say had been borne in upon his soul by an overarching certainty born of feeling-thought-intuition, that is, by an experience. For him, this was validation. But for his hearers he used the further tests of Scripture, of reason, and of tradition, depending usually upon which of these spokesmen would be judged most eloquent by his audience. Granted, then, the interaction of Scripture and experience, he sought corroboration of these in the experience and Scriptural interpretations of the church's history (particularly of the Patristic writings), and then he searched the whole in the light of reason.

This whole process of trying to break down for analysis the components of Wesley's doctrine of authority is a little like trying to analyze an egg without breaking the shell and the yolk, and therefore without destroying the egg. Even while we are talking about the importance of reason and tradition, we dare not leave experience behind. In his sermon, "Walking

<sup>33</sup> Forsyth, P. T., *The Principle of Authority*, Hodder & Stoughton, 1913, p. 83.

<sup>34</sup> Even such an astute observer as Casserley has been mistaken here. Cf. his *The Retreat from Christianity in the Modern World*, Longmans, New York, 1952, pp. 45, 47, 72.

<sup>35</sup> *Op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 413.

<sup>36</sup> 1771; cf. also Vol. XIII, p. 272.

by Sight and Faith,"<sup>37</sup> he quotes the Latin, "*nihil est in intellectu quod non fuit prius in sensu*," and renders it, "nothing is in the understanding which was not first perceived by some of the senses."

Nor have reason and Scripture been left behind. Hear him—the Oxford logician, remember—in *A Plain Account*:<sup>38</sup>

Try all things by the written word. . . . You are in danger of enthusiasm every hour, if you depart ever so little from Scripture; yea, or from the plain, literal meaning of any text, taken in connection with the context. And so you are, if you despise or lightly esteem reason, knowledge, or human learning; every one of which is an excellent gift of God, and may serve the noblest purposes.

I advise you never to use the words wisdom, reason, or knowledge, by way of reproach.<sup>39</sup>

Wesley opposed the arid rationalism of the deist. He did not, could not, lightly esteem the reason which was recognized, as in the above passage, as "an excellent gift of God," so long as one saw that just as it "may serve the noblest purposes" so may it also serve the basest. Here we have an echo of his beloved Jeremy Taylor, who wrote in *Holy Living and Holy Dying*: "let reason, and experience, and religion, and hope relying upon divine promises, be the measure of our judgment. . . . But, besides the reasonableness of this faith and this hope, we have infinite experience of it."<sup>40</sup>

Wesley's concern was only for "the overturning of all the prejudices of corrupt reason . . . that blind leader of the blind, so idolized by the world, natural reason. . . ."<sup>41</sup>

The great weight he gave to tradition is seen in the scrupulous care he took regarding ordination. He has been accused by many, including some Methodist writers,<sup>42</sup> of jettisoning the doctrine of apostolic succession. On the contrary, it was because Wesley believed in this succession so thoroughly that he took what some would call heterodox action. There was no question of unordained men giving communion. His sense of the continuity of the church as the body of Christ was too great for that. Wesley merely refused to equate apostolic succession with ecclesiastic succession.

Wesley united Scripture and experience in a wondrous, happy, if not always peaceful marriage. He asked the child of that marriage, reason, to support it and the grandparent of that marriage, tradition, to bless it. Because he had *experienced* the sacraments as a means of grace, he wrote con-

<sup>37</sup> *Op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 424.

<sup>38</sup> p. 138.

<sup>39</sup> Yet Casserley calls him an irrationalist! (See above, note 34.)

<sup>40</sup> Taylor, Jeremy, *Holy Living and Holy Dying*, Philadelphia: Thomas Wardle, pp. 105, 116.

<sup>41</sup> *Op. cit.*, "Circumcision of the Heart," Vol. I, pp. 149-152. Italics mine.

<sup>42</sup> See R. P. Marshall, "Wesley's Doctrine of Holy Communion," *The Pastor*, September, 1951, p. 12.

cerning the Quaker rejection of them that he would "as soon commence deist as Quaker." Because he had *experienced* the church itself as a means of grace—and this, I think, is the reason, not an unseeing conservatism—he died a priest of the Church. He stated in his Deed of Declaration sent to the King's court that Methodist chapels were being used and were to be used only by ordained ministers of the English Church. Only a few months before his death, he wrote in the Arminian magazine, "I live and die a member of the church of England, and none who regard my judgment will ever separate from it."

Wesley did not mistake notional contradiction for experiential contradiction. This is of the utmost importance. He was able to speak of the continual sense of dependence upon God in one sentence and of human freedom in the next precisely because, however logically irreconcilable they might be, he had *experienced* dependence and he had *experienced* freedom. That he stated it, knowing that the syllogistic is not necessarily a barometer of the spiritual, is to his lasting credit.

Wesley tried, by every faith-full and reasonable means at his command, to understand the Holy Scriptures. He checked his conclusions with those of the fathers of the faith. Then he looked around him for confirmation in human experience. The Bible is by definition true, he reasoned. If I do not find that truth revealed in human lives, then I can only conclude that I have interpreted the Scripture falsely.<sup>43</sup>

It perhaps ought to be stated that we have been trying to set forth Wesley's maturest thought on the doctrine of authority. In his earlier days he had not always seen the importance of this vital interaction. While at Oxford he was still under the death grip of rationalism. Faith, for him, in those days was "an assent upon rational grounds" and "must at length be resolved into reason."<sup>44</sup> During this period he had isolated the very important intellectual function of the human personality and had substituted it for the whole man. But later, when he threw off its death grip, he made the giant reason his slave. Then the sparks flew upward. Later<sup>45</sup> he made the Biblical authority supreme. Still later, and finally, he rounded out his views in a manner, we trust, not unlike what has been described herein.

<sup>43</sup> *A Plain Account*, p. 88.

<sup>44</sup> *Letters*, *op. cit.*, Vol. I, p. 23.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 25.



# Kodesh, Mishpat and Chessed

## A Philological Approach to Some Attributes of God

ROBERT I. KAHN

WORDS HAVE PERSONALITIES all their own. Translate them, and inevitably they lose something in the passage. Like a photograph, which can catch a face in only one mood, a translation catches a word in only one association. This is particularly true when we move from object words to value words, from the concrete to the abstract. The word for "tree" or "street" is rather easily rendered in another language, but a word like "sportsmanship"—how difficult to describe, let alone translate, in all its shades of meaning!

The native tongue of the Jewish faith is Hebrew. The sacred literature which recounts the Jews' growing knowledge of God was all written in Hebrew, or its cousin-language, Aramaic. Any attempt, therefore, to understand that faith or the religions which grew out of it, ought to begin with the Hebrew language rather than with a translation.

For this reason, I have been asked by the Editor of RELIGION IN LIFE to prepare this presentation of the attributes of God (or at least some of them) as implied in the Hebrew words *Kodesh*, *Mishpat*, and *Chessed*—translated roughly: "holiness," "justice," and "mercy"—as they are used in the Hebrew Bible. The author does not claim to be an expert in either philology or theology, but he has brought all that he does know to bear upon this subject, in the hopes that it will deepen the knowledge and broaden the spiritual horizons of him who reads.

### I. KODESH: HOLINESS

Without having actually made a count, it is my impression that there is hardly another word in the Hebrew language with a wider or more varied use and application than the various permutations of the root *Kadash* (even as its various translations, "holy," "hallowed," "sacred," "sacrament," "saint," etc., are the core of the English religious vocabulary). It is part

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of daily worship in the *kedusha* prayer, which includes the threefold *kadosh* of Isaiah (Isa. 6:3). Each Friday evening, the Jewish father, acting as priest at his family table, lifts the wine cup and recites the *kiddush* prayer, thus hallowing the Sabbath. The sacrament of marriage is *kiddushin*; the synagogue is a *bes hamikdosh*; its storeroom a *hekdesb* (considering how storerooms usually look, this might be translated as a "holy mess"); the congregation is a *kehilla kedoshah*; God is entitled *Hakadosh*, The Holy One; to die for his name is *kiddush hashem*; and in sorrow, a Jew recites the *kaddish* prayer. The root *kadash* runs like a golden thread in the tapestry of Judaism.

For the non-Hebraist, let me explain that the variety of vowels means merely a change of grammar, tense, gender, or number. All Hebrew words are like English irregular verbs. "Sing," "sang," "sung," changes vowels but not consonants. Look only for the *k*, *d*, and *sh* of the root, which acquires in its transmutations various prefixes, suffixes, and a variety of vowels.

What does *kadash* really mean? What is its origin, its etymology?

Gesenius, the Hebrew lexicographer, suggests that the primary meaning of the word is "cleanliness," and that by association it came to mean purity of behavior, hence, holy. To support this theory, Gesenius points to the use of the root in connection with camp hygiene. Latrines were ordered to be constructed *outside* the camp, because God walks through the camp. "Therefore, shall thy camp be holy" (Deut. 23:13-15). Similarly, the priests were bidden to wash themselves before holy service, and a man achieved saintliness by holding aloof from physical and moral uncleanness. (Gesenius would have approved the commercial which says that "our wine is so pure it is used for sacramental purposes!")

Brown, Driver, and Briggs, on the other hand, suggest in their Hebrew Lexicon that the primary sense of the root *kadash* means "to set aside," "to separate." The holy is, therefore, something set aside from the profane, dedicated to religious purposes, as in a holy day, holy man, holy building. Probably the best illustration of this use of the term would be in the words of the marriage ceremony: "Behold, thou art *m'kudosh* to me," i.e., "reserved to me alone, forbidden to others."

But it seems to me that neither of these suggestions truly grasp the essence of the word. For if *kadash* meant merely cleanliness on the one hand, or separateness on the other, we would not need the word at all. There are many adequate Hebrew terms for these concepts. And certainly we would never refer to God as the Holy One if we meant the Clean One, or

the Separate One. On the contrary, it is this application of *kadash* to the Divine which gives us the clue to its primary meaning out of which have grown the secondary meanings suggested by Gesenius and Brown, Driver, and Briggs.

*Kadash* is the Hebrew root which refers to that dimension of life which we call the spiritual. It is used to describe that emotional experience which Otto called the "Sense of the Holy." It is, likewise, the Holy One which is the object of that experience. And it attaches itself as a quality to those tools, places, people, and even techniques by which the experience is aroused and cultivated. Holiness, as the Hebrew language conceives it, is, like beauty or truth, a *quality*. It is the spiritual dimension of man, of the world in which man lives, and, most of all, of the God whose quality he reflects. God is Holy; this is his essence, his nature. No other word describes as does this one, the reality of his Being. All other words describe his functions, power, or character. When we say that God is Omniscient or Omnipotent, Creator or Providence, we describe what he does or can do; *kadash* describes what he is.

When men feel a spiritual quickening at their sight of the stars at night, feel in worship a hush so quiet that the world stands still within the heart, or walk through great arches of trees and feel a sanctity beyond human language, this is the sacred experience of the Holy One. It is deep speaking to deep; it is the Holy in us responding to the Holy God.

This, I do believe, is the primary meaning of *kadash*. And out of this meaning, as it is experienced, there grew the secondary and derived ideas of separateness and cleanliness.

Holy came to mean the sacred, as set aside from the profane, in this wise. When early man would experience the presence of God, he would (logically for him) attach the experience to the location where it took place, and thus it became holy. So Moses, hearing God's voice, was constrained to take off his shoes because it was *admas kodesh*, holy ground. So, likewise, holy mountain, holy city, holy temple, holy garments, all had the acquired characteristics of association with the Divine. (And even in our times, we would not have a box lunch on the pulpit of a church, or use the Bible as a footstool! We have no primitive concepts of *tabu*, but we do feel that things used for sacred worship should not be put to profane use.) Thus, it seems to me, Brown, Driver, and Briggs were misled into thinking of separateness as the origin of holiness. It was precisely the opposite.

So, too, it seems to me, Gesenius' suggestion of holiness as derived from

cleanliness has put matters backward. It is the experience of the holy which arouses the feeling of uncleanness, of moral impurity. In the presence of the holy, how unworthy man feels! So it was with Isaiah, who after hearing the angels sing, "*Kadosh, Kadosh, Kadosh*," said, "Woe is me, for I am a man of unclean lips!" (Isa. 6) And so, with every spiritual experience, man feels his own insignificance, unworthiness, uncleanness, and impurity. How easy, therefore, for Gesenius to conclude that *kadash* means *clean*. The effect is taken for the cause, the derived for the primary.

*Kadash*, as we have said, is the quality of divinity, of Godliness which permeates all the world and enters the soul of man. The experience of it is the beginning of religion; the reality of it is the nature of God.

## II. MISHPAT: JUSTICE

God's nature is described by the word *kadash*; his character is limned by the words *mishpat* and *chesed*—justice and mercy. The tension between these two concepts, the polarity of divine character which they imply, the seemingly mutual exclusion they infer, is one of the great paradoxes of religion, but one with which we shall not even attempt to deal in any thorough way. Our purpose here is to analyze these two words, philologically, as they reveal the character of God.

*Mishpat* is the noun of the verbal root *shafat*, meaning to set upright or erect, and coming to mean "to administer." The earliest use of the word *shofet* is in the Book of Judges, where "Judge" obviously applies to civil and military heads of government rather than to jurists on the bench. This is true in other Semitic languages. The Romans transliterated the titles of Carthaginian leaders as *Sofetes*. The *shofet* began as governor, and *mishpat* was an ordinance issued on his authority.

But *mishpat* comes to mean much more; it comes to characterize the attributes of a judge, and to mean an act of justice also. As such, it was frequently paired with *tsedek* (usually translated as righteousness) which in its root form means "straight," and implies that justice is first a standard and then an application. *Tsedek* is the principle of straightness against which we measure *mishpat* as an ordinance or a decision. The double meaning of administrator and absolute principle is most revealingly put in the words with which Abraham challenged God to live up to himself: "Shall not the *Shofet* of all the earth do *mishpat*?" (Gen. 18:25)

When *mishpat*, in its many grammatical forms, both nominal and verbal, is used of the Divine, it is sometimes as an attribute, other times as a

function; it describes his feelings, and his actions. God is lawmaker and law interpreter; he is judge and jury, lawyer for the plaintiff and for the defendant, and even a litigant himself, as well as the abstract spirit of absolute justice whom men invoke.

God is the source of law. Constantly Moses refers to the ordinances of God (*mishp'te adonoy*). He was the author of the laws and commandments, the rules and regulations which fill the *Pentateuch*. As the administrator, his were the rules by which the world was to be governed.

God is also a judge, sitting at the bench, deciding where justice lies, separating the good and the evil. David sang of him that "He has come to judge the earth" (I Chron. 16:33) and the same thought is repeated in Joel and Psalms (see Ps. 96 and 98). Ezekiel, in particular, sees God in this role, handing down opinions according to the merits and guilt of those on trial (Ezek. 3:27, 16:38, 34, and elsewhere).

God is, furthermore, the administrator of justice, the "lord high executioner," as it were, who carries out his own sentence. In the remark of Cush to David, reporting Absalom's death, "The Lord *sh'fat'cho* this day" (II Sam. 18:31), the Hebrew verb is usually translated "has avenged thee," but the truer meaning would be "has judged your case and carried out his sentence."

God will act as an attorney. "He will judge the fatherless and the oppressed" (Dt. 10:8, Ps. 10:18, 72:4, etc.). "He will plead (*shafat*) with man face to face" (Ezek. 20:5). He will even be the litigant. "The Lord standeth up to plead. . . (He) will enter into judgment (i.e., take up a lawsuit)" (Isa. 3:13-14). And Job, in his desperate search for understanding, even suggests that God be the defendant! He calls for a trial that he may enter his plea against the Almighty.

Yes, when justice is ascribed to God, it is in his every possible role as the upholder of righteousness. And all this because he is just, because the attributes of a righteous judge are pre-eminent in him. His ways are straight; his paths are sure; his judgments are true. He shows no favors; he cannot be bribed; he is judge of all the earth.

For this reason, he is invoked as the very Spirit of Justice without which human justice has no foundation. So Sarah calls God to judge between Abraham and her (Gen. 16:5); the Israelitish elders pray that God may see and judge Moses and Aaron (Deut. 5:31); Jephthah invokes God's judgment in his differences with the king of the Ammonites; David appeals

to it in his dealings with Saul, and the Jewish people, in their suffering, call upon God to be their judge. Of course, in some ways these appeals may be ejaculations such as "May God strike me pink!" But it is the popular use of terms which gives us deeper insight into their meaning.

The attribute of justice, of setting things right, of being the Absolute Just in a world of relative injustice—these are the implications of the many forms of *mishpat* when applied to the Almighty.

### III. CHESSED: MERCY

The quality which is co-ordinate to *mishpat* on the graph of God's character is *chesed*—mercy, love, lovingkindness, or, in the awkward expression of the R.S.V., "steadfast love."

God is merciful. The beautiful rubric from Exodus 34:6-7 (which is used in Jewish worship on every sacred festival), "The Lord, the Lord God, is merciful and gracious, long-suffering and abundant in goodness and ever true, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin," rings every possible change upon the tender, gracious, loving, and forgiving qualities of the Almighty. As a whole, and in its parts, it is repeated again and again in the biblical books of Jonah, Joel, Micah, and Nehemiah. Although the word is unusually rare in Ezekiel, there is hardly a Psalm which does not include it. "His mercies endure forever" is a phrase repeated again and again in Psalms 107, 118, and elsewhere. God is asked for many a benefit "for the sake of his mercy."

Etymologically, the word *chesed* is difficult to trace. *Chanun*, which is related to it in meaning and function, comes from a root meaning "to bend," and suggests a lovely metaphoric description of God bending down to hear the cry of the suffering. *Rachum*, which is frequently used in association with and substitution for *chesed*, has similarly a beautiful metaphoric derivation. I believe it was Emma Lazarus who called attention to the fact that whereas the Greek word for womb, *hysteros*, gives us our modern *hysteria*, the Hebrew word for womb, *rechem* (giving us *rachum*, merciful), implies a maternal tenderness as part of God's nature.

The derivation of *chesed* is not so clear. Some suggest that it means mild, therefore kindly. In Arabic, there is a cousin-word which has to do with being a good host, being courteous. Gesenius submits the root meaning *eager or ardent desire*. Dr. Theodore Gaster, of Dropsie College and Columbia University, told me, in personal conversation, that the root of



*chessed* means friendship or family-feeling. (I find this most interesting in view of the fact that English reveals a similar relationship between *kin* and *kind*. We act kindly to kindred.)

When the word is used of human interrelationships, it is the equivalent of what we today would call a favor or a kindness, in a limited sense. So Abraham tells Sarah that if, in the presence of Pharaoh, she will call him brother, she will be doing him a *chessed*. Rahab, in dealing with Joshua, put it on a *quid pro quo* basis—*chessed* for *chessed*. In this connection, it should be noted that our word "mercy" is derived from the same root as "merchandise": mercy is, as it were, payment or repayment for goods or services rendered. The Psalmist suggests this implication in 62:13: "Also unto thee, O Lord, belongeth mercy, for thou renderest to every man according to his work."

But for the most part, *chessed* is far more than favor or wages. Especially as it is used of God, it refers to his kindly, loving, and tender qualities. His steadfast love is woven on the larger loom of his very nature. *Chassid ani*—"I am a Merciful One," says God of himself (Jer. 3:12). God is good, sweet, loving, forgiving, gracious, compassionate, and patient. His justice is balanced by his mercy; his anger is quenched by his love. In his mercy, he redeems his loved ones from their enemies. He preserves them for life; he redeems them from sin. "His tender mercies are over all his works."

#### IV

The paradox in these qualities of *mishpat* and *chessed* might seem to have gone unnoticed. So often the two words are used in the same verse as *parallels* to each other! So Jeremiah says, without any sense of contrast: "Let them glory in this, that they know that I, the Lord, do mercy and justice" (9:23). "God loves righteousness and justice; his mercy fills the earth" (Ps. 33:5). So, likewise, in many another Psalm (36, 89, 119, for example) and elsewhere.

But such expressions which link these two qualities are not merely effusions of adoration in which words are used without discrimination; on the contrary, they imply that though these qualities are polar to each other, there is a pole which connects them, unites them, resolves their differences, that both are necessary when administered by the same Person. In this spirit, Jeremiah cries: "O Lord, correct me, with judgment but not in anger, lest you destroy me" (10:24).

The sages of the Talmud solved the paradox by assigning God's qualities to his Name. They knew nothing of the documentary theory, of *E* or of *J*. To them *J* was the Merciful One, and *E* the Just One, and *JE* was both in Him. In a daring anthropomorphic simile, they pictured the throne room of Heaven as having not one, but two thrones for God—one the throne of justice, the other, of mercy. They felt it no irreverence to conceive of God as hastening from the one to the other, that in mercy he might suspend a sentence he had passed in justice.

Man, of course, cannot solve this paradox. He can only recognize it in the heart of God as he experiences it in his own life—that *mishpat* AND *chessed* are equally characteristic of God, and equally demanded of men. In following Micah's plea to do justly and love mercy, man fulfills God's command: "*K'doshim* shall you be, for I, the Lord your God, am *Kadosh*" (Lev. 19).

# Two Conflicting Trends in Protestant Theological Thinking

DEANE W. FERM

THERE ARE, it seems to me, two recent trends in Protestant theological thinking. Although these two trends do agree in many details, nevertheless their basic approaches are radically different because they start from different frames of reference. It is not my intent in this article to take sides on this issue, but, rather, to sharpen the demarcation of approaches.

The Judeo-Christian religious tradition begins with the assumption of the existence of God. Just as natural science assumes that there is an external world that can be known by means of information received from our sensory channels of knowledge, the Judeo-Christian faith assumes that there is a God, and that our primary purpose is to be in a right relationship with him. The essential problem, then, is how we can know God and his will for us. This is an epistemological problem. And how we solve this problem of knowledge will determine which trend in Protestant theological thinking we shall follow. William James used to say something to this effect: tell me your ontological position, and I can predict what your position will be on almost every philosophical issue. To paraphrase James, I would say: tell me your epistemological frame of reference, and I can, in general, predict what your position will be on almost every theological issue.

The two Protestant theological trends which have their basic difference in their epistemological frame of reference, I shall call *Neo-orthodoxy* and *Reconstructionism*.

## I. EPISTEMOLOGY

1. The epistemological frame of reference for Neo-orthodoxy is Kantian. Briefly, Immanuel Kant said that our minds are so constructed that we can never know the noumenal world—*das Ding an sich*. We know the world only through our colored mental lenses; hence, we know things

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only as they *appear* to us (phenomenalism). The phenomenal and noumenal worlds are different in kind; we can know only the world of phenomena. Therefore, because we are caught in this web, no amount of rational deliberation will enable us to know the nature of true reality (the noumenal). With this epistemological assumption Immanuel Kant rejected the traditional arguments for the existence of God. We can never know God—even in part.

Protestant neo-orthodoxy has accepted the Kantian epistemology. This view affirms that, since we can never know God by rational deliberation or through the ordinary channels of knowledge, we must accept *on faith* the revelation of God in the *events* of Jewish-Christian history. Karl Barth, the leading exponent of the neo-orthodox movement today, defines Christian faith as "the gift of the meeting in which men become free to hear the word of grace which God has spoken in Jesus Christ in such a way that, in spite of all that contradicts it, they may once for all, exclusively and entirely, hold to His promise and guidance."<sup>1</sup>

This faith is not something about which we can argue; contradictions are irrelevant. One does not argue about historical events; they just happen. It is a matter of faith, not reasoning. This is why Barth can exclaim quite bluntly, "There can be no Christian philosophy, for if it is Christian it is not philosophy, and if it is philosophy it is not Christian."<sup>2</sup> Divine revelation is defined wholly as God's approach to man. God reaches out and confronts man, and man through his own rational powers cannot even attempt to understand this divine confrontation. It is a confrontation of acts and events, not of truths.

The beginning of the neo-orthodox movement is usually dated by the publication of Karl Barth's *Commentary on Romans* (1918). For Barth there is no such thing as *natural* theology; this is a contradiction of terms. He declares the absolute validity of the Bible as the Word of God, as the genuine, supreme criterion of the Church proclamation and thereby also of dogmatics. To be sure, Barth and his followers accept in general the results of historical biblical research. But even so, the Bible, in a sense a human book written in the language of man, is still the Word of God. The Bible contains the Truth which is the grace of God in Jesus Christ. This is not something to be examined rationally, it must be accepted on faith. Barth readily admits that he has been deeply influenced by Immanuel Kant. He has stated that it was Kant who showed the eighteenth century

<sup>1</sup> Barth, Karl, *Dogmatics in Outline*, Philosophical Library, 1949, p. 15.

<sup>2</sup> Quoted in Bixler, J. S., *A Faith That Fulfills*, Harper & Brothers, 1951, p. 31.

the futility of human reason in attempting to understand true reality. God lies wholly beyond human experience; he is Transcendent, Wholly Other.

Another familiar Christian doctrine which readily fits in the epistemological frame of reference of Barth and his neo-orthodox followers is the doctrine of Original Sin. Our minds—or natures—are so constructed, or warped, that we can never know God even in part. Our sin, an ingredient of our natures, keeps us from a true knowledge of God. This is an added reason why we must accept the revelation of God *on faith*. As Paul Tillich puts it:

Man is bound to sin in all parts of his being, because he is estranged from God in his personal center. Neither his emotion, his will, nor his intellect is excepted from sin and, consequently, from the perversion of their true nature. His intellectual power is as distorted and weakened as his moral power. Neither of them is able to produce reunion with God. According to biblical religion, intellectual endeavor can as little attain the ultimate truth as moral endeavor can attain the ultimate good. He who attempts it deepens the estrangement. This was the message of Paul, Augustine, and Luther. Only he who in the state of faith participates in the good and the true can act according to the norms of truth.<sup>3</sup>

2. The Reconstructionist epistemological frame of reference is naturalistic. This view affirms that there is no dichotomy between the phenomenal and noumenal worlds as there is in the Kantian system. Our minds are like the world about us. Thus, we can know the nature of true reality in part. Admittedly, we can never know God fully; we are finite. But the assumption here is that we can know God in part by rational deliberation. For example, if I dip a cup into a lake, the water in the cup will tell me something of the nature of the lake, although it will not tell me everything. The fact that we cannot have a system of beliefs which will be absolutely final does not mean that we cannot have any truth at all. To say that since we do not know everything about something, we therefore know nothing at all, is as foolish as to say that since we know something about something, we know everything about it! We may know in part and still know.

The reconstructionists stress the immanence of God in experience and the recognition of divinity working through natural processes. Because our ability to think reflectively is a gift from God, we can discern his immanence in part. For the reconstructionists, reason and faith are inseparably connected; reason becomes an adventure of faith. Julius Seelye Bixler, a leading reconstructionist today, puts it this way:

<sup>3</sup> Tillich, P., *Biblical Religion and The Search for Ultimate Reality*. University of Chicago Press, 1955, p. 55.

Where religion is concerned, the claim of the liberal is simply that, in so far as faith involves us in questions where rational judgment is needed, the usual rational tests must be applied. It is hard to see how anyone can take another view. The only possible difference of opinion would seem to come over the question of what happens when feeling, as for example in art or friendship, takes us to experiences where thought is temporarily in abeyance. And, whether you accept it or not, the position of the liberal at this point is clear. It is, first, that whenever faith makes statements about matters that thought can check, thought is the final judge of correctness; and second, whenever faith leaves thought temporarily behind, it must do so in a way which ultimately presents new data for thought and amplifies instead of restricting its influence. . . . A faith that is to endure must make its peace with reason and allow its tests to be applied wherever they are relevant.<sup>4</sup>

The reconstructionists, consistent with their epistemological position, reject the doctrine of Original Sin. As Bixler says:

The motives of those who stress this point (Original Sin) are of course easy to understand. They want, as they say, to make our theological point of view more inclusive and profound. We can agree with them that the horrors of recent years have literally shocked us not only out of all complacency but out of the confidence our technical advances had created. It is true that we need a theology that will minister to the bitterness of our disillusionment. But this return to Calvinism and renewal of a Calvinistic emphasis on sin will not give it to us. It fails to offer the kind of depth we need and it affords us no help in facing the future. With its insistence that something is *ineradicably* and *unchangeably* wrong it takes away such confidence as we have left. . . . As a topic for introspection, then, sin fails to stimulate the energies of the heart while as a theological doctrine it is unable to answer the inquiries of the mind.<sup>5</sup>

## II. THE PROBLEM OF AUTHORITY

I. The neo-orthodox view affirms that the locus of authority is the Bible. Barth, we have already noted, speaks of the absolute validity of the Bible as the Word of God. The Bible contains the Story of Salvation in which God is the Chief Actor in the events of Jewish history, and supremely, uniquely, and finally in the event of Jesus as the Christ. The emphasis here is on historical *events*. Events are not subject to rational deliberation. The fact that God was acting in these events must be accepted on faith; take it or leave it. In fact, Barth even says that God's becoming man cannot be repeated.<sup>6</sup>

The stress among the neo-orthodox theologians is on *special* revelation; that is, that God has revealed himself uniquely in the Judeo-Christian tradition. Karl Barth writes that "only the man who knows about Jesus Christ knows anything at all about revelation," so that "the confession be-

<sup>4</sup> Bixler, J. S., *op. cit.*, p. 27, p. 46.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 67-68.

<sup>6</sup> Barth, K., *op. cit.*, p. 68.



comes inevitable that Jesus Christ *alone* is the revelation." Other so-called revelations "we can only call 'revelations' in a perverted, invalid, and loose sense of the concept."<sup>7</sup> In another passage which states the neo-orthodox position clearly as to why the Bible is the all-sufficient authority, Barth declares:

It is not the right human thoughts about God which form the content of the Bible, but the right divine thoughts about men. The Bible tells us not how we should talk with God, but what he says to us; not how we find the way to him, but how he has sought and found the way to us; not the right relation in which we must place ourselves to him, but the covenant which he has made with all who are Abraham's spiritual children and which he has sealed once and for all in Jesus Christ.<sup>8</sup>

It is evident, then, why neo-orthodox theologians reject for the most part the notion of a *general* revelation. Emil Brunner believes that God has in some degree revealed himself to all men, but since this general revelation is not of the smallest saving value, it is of no help to us. Hendrik Kraemer in his book, *The Christian Message in a Non-Christian World*, develops the point that there is a sharp demarcation between religious experience in general and the Christian revelation in Christ. He concludes that the biblical revelation "as the record of God's self-disclosing revelation in Jesus Christ is absolutely *sui generis*. It is the story of God's sovereign redeeming acts having become decisively and finally manifest in Jesus Christ, the Son of the Living God, in Whom God became flesh and revealed His grace and truth."<sup>9</sup> Thus, the present trend among neo-orthodox theologians is that the Bible is all-sufficient as the basis of authority, and that the meaning of history is to be found exclusively in the Judeo-Christian tradition.

Note the Kantian epistemology. We cannot know true reality (God) even in part by human reason. God has disclosed himself in certain historical events, and this divine disclosure must be accepted on faith. Since the neo-orthodox theologians regard the Bible as supreme, it is obvious why they stress the importance of using biblical symbols and terminology. In fact, many of these theologians are very careful not to use philosophical terminology (by which they mean nonbiblical), for this might imply a close linkage between biblical religion and philosophy. Such terms as creation, redemption, sin, judgment, and reconciliation are dominant in their writings, with Sin at the top of the neo-orthodox Hit Parade. These men have also inaugurated a "back to the Reformers" movement. There has been an

<sup>7</sup> Barth in J. Baillie, ed., *Revelation*, The Macmillan Company, 1937, p. 48, p. 53, p. 45.

<sup>8</sup> Barth, K., *The Word of God and the Word of Man*, Pilgrim Press, Chicago, 1928, p. 43.

<sup>9</sup> Kraemer, H., *The Christian Message in a Non-Christian World*, Harper & Brothers, 1938, p. 23.

intensified re-examination of the writings of the men who stand at the beginning of the Protestant Reformation. This is why the term "neo-orthodoxy" is so appropriate, since the movement is primarily a reassertion of the original Protestant orthodoxy.

2. For the reconstructionists the locus of authority is human experience. We can know God in part. Therefore, let us speak out of our own experiences rather than rely on a trans-rational revelation. When the neo-orthodox proponents assert that the Bible is the supreme revelation of God, the reconstructionists retort that the early Christians did not even have a New Testament, and that the canon of the New Testament was not determined until the fourth century. Are we, they ask, to rely exclusively on the decisions of Bishop Athanasius, Pope Innocent I, and others as to what is God's revelation? Morton Enslin, another leading reconstructionist, writes that the liberal

turns away in suspicion from the insistence, so wide-spread at the moment, that God's "plan for salvation," which he is being told is writ large in the Bible when the latter book is read aright—not as willful and captious critics would have it read, "piecemeal," but as one consistent and connected account of an event long prophesied and finally realized and which makes all subsequent history definitely anticlimactic, if not actually meaningless—is admittedly contrary to reason and cannot be supported by factual proofs. Instead it must be accepted on faith, must be believed without evidence and even despite evidence. Then, if he has faith, really believes it, he will eventually see the evidence for it. . . .

To the liberal the Bible is not this. Instead it is something far more. Rather it is the record of centuries of achievement and pilgrimage of men and women like himself confronted with the tasks and problems of life. In the course of the years they made many discoveries, gained many insights. It is to him a priceless heritage of the past, and in it he finds much that aids him in his constant search for the gold of life. He is not in the slightest surprised to find it not infrequently self-contradictory were it to be regarded as one book. He knows that it is nothing of the sort but rather a library written by many men over the period of a thousand years. He is not surprised at differences and contradictory points of view. . . . When he is challenged by the brash, "So you don't believe the Bible," he is inclined, after perhaps a moment of annoyance at what appears to him bad manners and poor taste, to answer: "I love it, and that seems to me vastly more important."<sup>10</sup>

We must speak, then, out of our own experience. The reconstructionist emphasis is on *general* revelation. If God is the Creator of the world, then he has revealed himself and is revealing himself in nature and in human history in general. As Bixler puts it, "God works through the best that we know—our best love, our best will, our most reasonable strivings after righteousness and truth—and not through a miraculous dispensation

<sup>10</sup> Enslin, M., in Vergilius Ferm, ed., *The Protestant Credo*, Philosophical Library, 1953, p. 75, p. 80.

which leaves us confused.”<sup>11</sup> The reconstructionist point of view has been well expressed by A. K. Coomaraswamy, a scholar outside the pale of the Christian tradition, when he asserts that:

We cannot establish human relationships with other peoples if we are convinced of our own superiority or superior wisdom, and only want to convert them to our way of thinking. The modern Christian, who thinks of the world as his parish, is faced with the painful necessity of becoming himself a citizen of the world.<sup>12</sup>

For the reconstructionists, the Bible is a source of divine revelation, but it is not the only source. The divine communication has not been limited to one religious tradition. To be sure, there are certain “flash-points” which seem to reveal more clearly the nature of God. In the Bible and particularly in the person of Jesus are to be found some of the superior revelatory flash-points which serve to illuminate the rest of God’s creation. But to say that the Bible is all-sufficient as the source of God’s revelation is to say that only the past through one particular tradition gives the final answers. This, say the reconstructionists, has limited and would continue to limit the possibility of further and possibly greater flash-points.

Note the naturalistic epistemology that the reconstructionists assume. We can know God in part by human reason, because reason is a God-given power. The revelation of God can be discerned wherever and however we *experience* his presence. In contrast to the neo-orthodox emphasis on uniqueness, historical events, and special revelation, the reconstructionists emphasize universal values, experiences, and general revelation. Floyd Ross, another leading reconstructionist, states the case succinctly:

“Every history is sacred history. Every history is a gospel.” This is the cardinal principle which must underlie the interpretation of man’s history today, whether one starts as a Christian, a Buddhist, a Moslem, or a secularist. Every history is freighted with particular values; to the extent that tribal histories plumb universal depths, they need no defense. To the extent that they are particular or parochial, they will require continual re-examination. Either such localisms will need to be relinquished or they will have to be reconceived or translated into a wider idiom. If broader perspectives or richer meanings do emerge in man’s search for the conditions of a spiritually satisfying life—in traditional language, if God is the God of history and the God of man’s experience—then we must go to all human experience and not just to our past to discover more of those inclusive meanings in the light of which fragmentary or tribal meanings are seen in proper perspective and transcended.<sup>13</sup>

The reconstructionists, then, seek what is universal in the person of Jesus—not what is unique. Since they stress human experience as the locus

<sup>11</sup> Bixler, J. S., *op. cit.*, p. 37.

<sup>12</sup> Fern, V., *op. cit.*, p. 193.

<sup>13</sup> Ross, F., *Addressed to Christians: Isolationism vs. World Community*, Harper & Brothers, 1950, p. 132.

of authority, they like to speak in sociological and psychological terminology. Such terms as integration, value creation, and mutual self-expression are common. Instead of going back to the original Protestant Reformers as the neo-orthodox theologians are doing, the reconstructionists prefer to stress present experience, and examine the beliefs of other religions and cultures in order to discover universal values and truths. Henry Nelson Wieman speaks of the futility of reasserting the old orthodoxy.

There is no such coherent and unifying tradition today, or rather it is decaying and disintegrating before our eyes and all the attempts to re-establish it are in vain. Indeed, this is precisely what has always happened in every civilization relative to its traditional religion when it has reached a high level of complexity, power and wealth. Always, the attempt to restore the ancient ways and the old tradition has failed and it always will. It will today.<sup>14</sup>

Vergilius Ferm stresses the importance of universal values:

The chief sin that will beset religiously committed men is the worship of their heritage to the degree that they are blind to the creative values thrusting themselves upon us and giving us our sacred opportunity. To be specific, a Christian who believes in the supreme spiritual worth of Jesus of Nazareth even to the point of a Trinitarian theology need not make his loyalty to the Jesus of history and theology a cause greater than loyalty to what he must believe, if he is honest with himself, to be the universal spirit of Christ wherever found in any traditional faith. A Scripture becomes genuinely sacred in so far as its appeal touches the soul of man of whatever faith; the sacredness which tradition gives to it is far less significant. This is only to say, again, that the world of value is fundamentally an oceanic world, one that is *horizontal* fundamentally and self-authenticating.<sup>15</sup>

To be sure, there are neo-orthodox theologians today who attempt to straddle the two epistemological frames of reference. That is to say, they claim to believe in a general revelation and in the virtue of man's rational powers to a certain extent. In fact, the main stream of neo-orthodoxy in the United States today attempts to combine the legitimate use of human reason with a trans-rational revelation. It is significant to note, however, that this group of theologians quotes with approval Anselm's famous affirmation: "I do not seek to understand that I may believe, but I believe in order to understand. For this also I believe—that unless I believed, I should not understand."<sup>16</sup> In other words, these theologians accept on faith the trans-rational revelation in the *events* of the Bible, and then they seek confirmation for this revelation in their own experience and by

<sup>14</sup> Wieman, H. N., in Ferm, V., *op. cit.*, p. 183.

<sup>15</sup> Ferm, V., ed., *Religion in the Twentieth Century*, Philosophical Library, 1948, p. xiv.

<sup>16</sup> Anselm, "On the Existence of God," in the *Proslogium. Readings in Philosophy*, College Outline Series, J. H. Randall, ed., Barnes and Noble, p. 76.

the use of reason. To the reconstructionists this is an example of circular reasoning in which the point to be proved is assumed at the outset.

Paul Tillich, perhaps the leading neo-orthodox theologian today, in his recent excellent little book, *Biblical Religion and the Search for Ultimate Reality*, makes a strong case for the close relationship that ought to exist between theology and philosophy. He writes:

It is infuriating to see how biblical theologians, when explaining the concepts of the Old or New Testament writers, use most of the terms created by the toil of philosophers and the ingenuity of the speculative mind and then dismiss, with cheap denunciations, the work from which their language has been immensely enriched. No theologian should be taken seriously as a theologian, even if he is a great Christian and a great scholar, if his work shows that he does not take philosophy seriously. . . . *Against* Pascal I say: The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and the God of the philosophers is the same God.<sup>17</sup>

This passage could just as well have come from the lips of a reconstructionist theologian, and is an indication as to why the line of communication that the reconstructionists have with Tillich is so much more open than it is with other neo-orthodox theologians. In the final analysis, however, Tillich withdraws into a confessional position. In the first volume of his *Systematic Theology* he stresses the point that "Christianity claims to be based on the revelation in Jesus as the Christ as the final revelation. This claim establishes a church, and, where this claim is absent, Christianity has ceased to exist."<sup>18</sup> Since this trans-rational revelation is the ultimate authority, it seems to me that Tillich and others who follow him belong quite clearly in the Kantian epistemological frame of reference.

It should be said that the reconstructionists never claim that it would be even possible to know God fully by human reason. God is God and man is man, and never the twain shall meet fully. Martin Buber in his book *I and Thou* has a penetrating discussion of revelation as the self-disclosure of God. The revelation of God is, according to this Jewish theologian, analogous to the revelation that goes on between two persons. How do I know another person? I can observe him and know him in part, but I can have further knowledge of him only as he communicates and "reveals" himself to me. Revelation between man and God is a two-way communication. Both the neo-orthodox theologians and the reconstructionists have made use of this meaning of revelation. The difference is that the former conceive the self-disclosure of God as being communicated in a

<sup>17</sup> Tillich, P., *op. cit.*, pp. 7-9, p. 85.

<sup>18</sup> Tillich, P., *Systematic Theology*, Vol. I. Chicago University Press, 1951, p. 132.

trans-rational way, while the latter consider the revelation as coming through natural rational processes.

### III. EXISTENTIALISM AND ESSENTIALISM

1. A recent trend in the neo-orthodox school is Existentialism. This term was virtually unknown forty years ago in theological seminaries. Briefly, existentialism in the raw is the doctrine that existence is prior to essence; that reality in itself is prior to knowledge *about* reality. This is, of course, the Kantian epistemology all over again. Suppose you see a chair. The chair can be described in terms of hardness, color, size, etc. This is knowledge *about* the chair (phenomenal). You can never know the chair-in-itself (noumenal). The trouble with the philosophers, say the existentialists, is that they construct a system of beliefs and principles which always remain beliefs and principles. Does not existence antedate man's ideas about existence? Any philosophical system or definition remains in the realm of essence. Thus, existence is prior to essence, since we can never know the thing-in-itself. This is pure Kantian epistemology.

Contemporary Christian existentialism began around the end of the first World War, and centered in a renewed interest in the Danish theologian Søren Kierkegaard (1813-1855). Kierkegaard had reacted strongly against the philosopher Hegel's dictum that the real is the rational and the rational is the real. This, said Kierkegaard, is moving in the realm of essences; man is incapable of knowing reality-in-itself. Existence just is; it is trans-rational; one simply is confronted by it.

At this point neo-orthodox theologians have followed Kierkegaard in the same way that they have followed Immanuel Kant. Man is incapable of knowing God even in part by human reason (the realm of essences); therefore, he must accept on faith a divine confrontation in the events described in the Bible. The neo-orthodox theologians are in this way consistently following the implications of their epistemological position. These same thinkers have followed Kierkegaard at another point also. Kierkegaard speaks of this encounter with naked existence as precipitated by a feeling of anguish and despair. In a time of crisis man is confronted by God. It is this feeling of "sickness unto death" that prepares the way for the self-disclosure of God in the human existential encounter. Karl Barth has said that man is in anguish until the "Word of God" takes possession of him. In short, neo-orthodox theologians have found confirmation for their general position in the revival centering around Kierkegaard.

2. The reconstructionists hold to a position which I have termed



*Essentialism.* They readily admit that man is confronted by a world which is not dependent for its existence on man's rational powers. However, they follow the implications of their naturalistic epistemology and refuse to make a dichotomy between essence and existence, between the nature of man and the nature of true reality. Man's power to reason is akin to the nature of reality. This creative power to think reflectively is a gift to man that is like the Creative Power in the world. Essence and existence are interrelated; they cannot be divorced from each other.

Moreover, the reconstructionists reject the Kierkegaardian premise that a crisis of despair is a necessary prelude to an encounter with God. The divine disclosure, they declare, can come through all of the experiences of life—joy as well as anguish, healthy-mindedness as well as morbid-mindedness. Floyd Ross makes the point that:

It is one of the tragedies of Christian history that the men who determined the theological pattern or mood for the majority of Christians were men who through a certain combination of endowment and environment lived in the sense that they had quarreled with God. A Socrates or an Eckhart would have appreciated the comment of Thoreau who, when asked on his deathbed whether he had made peace with God, replied: "I was not aware that we had quarreled." Neither Paul, Augustine, nor Luther would have comprehended.<sup>10</sup>

And so the battle goes. To be sure, these theological "frames of reference" are not new. They extend far back into history in terms of the problem of the relationship between faith and reason. In the second century of the Christian era Tertullian claimed that Athens has nothing to do with Jerusalem; that philosophy has nothing to do with the Christian faith. I believe, he said, because it is absurd. At the same time Justin claimed that whatever has been uttered aright by any man in any place belongs to us Christians. Augustine acknowledged that reason has its limitations and must be superseded by faith. In the Middle Ages Duns Scotus said that the major Christian convictions cannot be demonstrated by reason; nor are they even consistent with it. We must believe, he said, solely on the authority of the Church and the Scriptures. William of Occam, a contemporary of Duns Scotus, said that none of the Christian beliefs can be proved by reason; they are to be accepted only on faith. It was Aquinas earlier who separated theology and philosophy into faith and reason respectively, each with its own spheres. It should be pointed out that the ascendancy of the views of Duns Scotus and William of Occam led to the disintegration of Scholasticism.

<sup>10</sup> Ross, F., *op. cit.*, p. 90.

The battle lines are sharply drawn today between the neo-orthodox theologians and the reconstructionists. Daniel Day Williams says:

Since Karl Barth's *Commentary on Romans*, of which the first edition was published in 1918, there has been a deepening consciousness that there is a radical settlement to be made between Christianity and the thought and values of the modern world. This settlement cannot be one of simple accommodation. In the modern period of Christianity there was an emphasis on the question, "How can the Christian faith be made intelligible within and in harmony with the highest idealism and scientific thought of our civilization?" Now the question is, "What is there in the Christian faith which gives us such an understanding of ourselves that we must assert our loyalty to the Holy God above all the splendid and yet corruptible values of our civilization?"<sup>20</sup>

It is clear, however, that Williams is speaking only for the neo-orthodox theologians when he stresses a "radical settlement" to be made between the Christian faith and the modern world. The reconstructionists would see in this statement another divorce between faith and reason. Several reconstructionists have banded together in a recent volume entitled *The Protestant Credo* which takes neo-orthodoxy's "radical settlement" to task and vigorously reasserts a Christian faith that is thoroughly reasonable.

The neo-orthodox theologians today are in the majority—or rather, in the positions of influence and power—as have been the orthodox down through the centuries. The reconstructionists are evident throughout the Church and are particularly strong among the laity. Neo-orthodoxy is the general temper of almost all the leading theological seminaries today. One indication of this is that the course in Philosophy of Religion is rapidly disappearing from theological curriculums. The substitute course is Philosophical Theology; the philosophizing about Christian theology; the faith seeking an understanding. Seminars in Kierkegaard and Barth are commonplace. Present-day reconstructionists such as Bixler, Ross, Ferm, Enslin, and Moehlman are almost unknown to seminary students.

The neo-orthodox theologians accuse the reconstructionists of eliminating the Christian element, or at least of watering down the Christian faith. Floyd Ross retorts, "If Protestantism is to be identified with its prevailing beliefs and practices, then I would have to admit that I am not a Protestant."<sup>21</sup> The reconstructionists point to many different revelation-claims among religious traditions, and ask how one is to judge among them as to their truth or falsity. Moreover, they ask the neo-orthodox theologians whether one has to be a Kantian in order to be a Christian. The neo-orthodox school replies that the Christian faith is not a debatable proposition; it is

<sup>20</sup> Williams, D. D., *What Present-Day Theologians Are Thinking*, Harper & Brothers, 1952, p. 12.

<sup>21</sup> Ross, F., in Ferm, V., ed., *The Protestant Credo*, pp. 219-220.

either true or false; you must make your decision in terms of one faith or another faith. And, as Kraemer states it, "The real Christian contention is not: 'We have the revelation and not you,' but pointing gratefully and humbly to Christ: 'It has pleased God to reveal Himself fully and decisively in Christ; repent, believe and adore,'"<sup>22</sup>

Vergilius Ferm answers for the reconstructionists by distinguishing between two kinds of Protestants—the *Catholic* Protestants and the *Protestant* Protestants; and it is clear that he means neo-orthodoxy and reconstructionism respectively. The Catholic Protestants are

conservative, looking back to the Confessions of the church, quoting the fathers, speaking of the Scriptures much in the same normative way as the fathers, emphasizing doctrines which the fathers underlined (e.g., the utter sinfulness of man, the mind of man standing over against the will of God, salvation from a world alien to God, a Chalcedonian Christology, and the like) and, of course, making much of the forms of organization which have persisted through more than four centuries (elders, bishops)—all the while claiming to be Scriptural and therefore securely grounded. . . .

The other group has found itself either in the minority within the Protestant church, going its way quietly and unofficially, or else it has set up an organized group which the larger conventional churches officially ignore. In the ecumenical Protestant movement, for example, the Unitarians and the Universalists and others have not counted. Their Protestantism is perhaps too Protestant for other Protestants. They are not Catholic enough: too informal, too unmanageable, too individualistic, too heretical on certain doctrines (for example, Trinity, soteriology, Christology, etc.). But they, too, are Protestant in spirit and even in heritage.<sup>23</sup>

I do not wish to predict in this article which "frame of reference" will become dominant—or which one is the "true" one. However, in view of the radical difference of epistemological positions, it does not appear that the time is ripe for a theological synthesis.

<sup>22</sup> Kraemer, H., *op. cit.*, p. 119.

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# A Shift of Accent

WILLIAM H. ROBERTS

## I

LONG BEFORE I HAD an opportunity to hear it, I knew *that* Bach's Saint Matthew Passion was great music.

When I had heard it for the third time, I *knew* that it was great music.

The shift of accent marks the transition from information *about* a value to appreciation *of* it. The distinction is of vital importance for any discussion of value. And there is nothing more important that human beings can discuss.

For what can be more important than importance itself? And value *is* importance. Values arise because something "makes a difference" to some being capable of happiness or misery. Things or events "make a difference" or "matter" to us because they satisfy or frustrate the demands we make upon the reality "in which we live and move and have our being." As Bertrand Russell has recently remarked: "If the sun were about to collide with another star, and the earth were about to be reduced to gas, we should judge the forthcoming cataclysm to be bad if we considered the existence of the human race good; but a similar cataclysm in a region without life would be merely interesting."<sup>1</sup>

The full range of his demands no man really knows. The desires of which he is conscious are by no means all his desires. There are also, psychoanalysts assure us, very real and very powerful desires of which he is unconscious. There are needs, too, of which he may or may not be aware. Fifty years ago, how many persons were aware of their need for vitamins? To his desires and his needs we must add capacities, present in everyone, of which one may never become aware, but which, if they are once aroused, may yield the most intense satisfaction or misery. To such

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<sup>1</sup> Russell, B., *Human Society in Ethics and Politics*, Simon and Schuster, 1955, p. 4.

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unsuspected possibilities of satisfaction we appeal whenever we urge another person to change a way of life with which he or she is content, whether that be in some trifling matter like cultivating a taste for olives or by some act of supreme importance, like forsaking sin to follow Christ.

It is easy enough to imagine a creature which would make *no* demands upon its surroundings. It would *care* about nothing whatever. We can endow this creature of our imagination with perfect awareness of things and happenings around it. We may grant it intelligence, even superhuman intelligence, and curiosity to trace the connections between events, to determine their causes and to predict their outcomes.

Such a creature is far from being so unreal, and by no means so fantastic, as we are likely at first to suppose. Some of us have at times come very close to being just such creatures. Some of us have certainly gone through at least brief periods in which it seemed to us that we had lost all capacity either for suffering or for satisfaction, we no longer cared about anything, nothing could any longer either hurt or please us, there was only an all-enveloping indifference to whatever might happen. An attitude of complete indifference to all values, moreover, is precisely the attitude that scientists, at least the "ideal" scientists, deliberately and painstakingly cultivate. They cultivate it because they must. Concern for values can only confuse scientific research.

A being to whom nothing whatever mattered might observe the events going on around it as accurately as a good mirror might reflect the same happenings—and remain as indifferent as the mirror. It would want nothing, enjoy nothing, dislike nothing, hate nothing, fear nothing. Of beauty or goodness or any other value, it could know only that human beings reported experiences it was wholly unable to understand. It might go so far as to develop elaborate classifications of the objects to which men and women apply their value terms. The value experience itself, wanting, rejecting, enjoying, disliking, hating and fearing, would remain incomprehensible. To a being without feeling or emotion, experience would lack what we may fairly call an entire dimension, the dimension of emotional depth. People, things, and happenings would be flattened, we may fancy them crushed by some enormous press, into mere facts.

To know a value, we must conclude, is to *feel* it. Knowledge of beauty or ugliness or any other value is a different kind of experience from information *about* it. It was not until I had been profoundly stirred by it that I *knew* Bach's oratorio was great music.

## II

If Plato had only made clear the distinction between the appreciation of values and information about them, ethical discussion in the centuries that have followed would have been relieved of one particularly vexatious confusion. Plato makes Socrates contend that virtue is simply knowledge, knowledge of the good. From his day to our own, critics have pointed out that men only too often know the good but choose the evil. "I do not do the good I want," cried St. Paul, "but the evil I do not want is what I do." (Rom. 7:19, R.S.V.) Reinhold Niebuhr in his latest book calls attention to the fact that men make use of reason at least as often to justify their wickedness as to discover what is right.

An objection that occurs to everyone within five minutes after becoming acquainted with the Socratic teaching must surely have occurred to Socrates and Plato. It did, of course, and in his dialogue with Protagoras Socrates dealt with it after a fashion. Yet it must be acknowledged that he did not make explicit the distinction between information and appreciation which the theory demands. Knowledge of the good, it should have been easy to show, is a different kind of knowledge from the information that Socrates' home was in Athens. It is to be regretted that no one asked, "Who would know what is right or wrong, or good or evil, better than lawyers? Are lawyers notably more virtuous than other persons?"

Such questioning, it seem to me, would soon have driven Socrates to admit that the "knowledge" of which he was speaking was, or at least involved, an emotional response. Such an admission would have greatly strengthened his argument, though it would, as we shall see later, have weakened his further argument that virtue can be taught.

If we take "knowledge of the good" to mean a correct appreciation of values, the Platonic-Socratic theory can hold its own against any criticism. Of St. Paul we may say that, in spite of his accurate information about good and evil—information, we may pause to remark, very like that of lawyers—he was emotionally uncertain. The deliverance he found and in which he rejoiced was from inner division and conflict. It made possible an integration of his energies around an ideal of which he could completely approve. St. Paul would agree, I believe, that no salvation from sin can be so complete or safe as the loss of all desire for its supposed pleasures, or in other words the complete certainty that sin just does not "pay."

That certainty must be emotional in addition to being intellectual. Once it has been attained, or accepted as a gift from the divine grace, one

begins to *live* with such joyous energy that the earlier life "in trespasses and sins" seems to be not life at all. One has "passed out of death into life." One is a "new creature." "All things have become new."

As for reason, it must be obvious that Plato and Professor Niebuhr use the term with two very different meanings. Plato was certainly as fully aware as Niebuhr that men reason to justify their wickedness. We need only call to mind Socrates' numerous clashes with the Sophists. The *Euthydemus* is a lengthy satire upon such reasoning. We should recall, too, that in the *Republic* Socrates declared it unwise to teach dialectic to men under thirty. Younger men, he asserted, would use the power it gave them to tear the institutions of the state to pieces, as puppies delight in tearing to pieces treasured household possessions.

In the second book of the *Republic* Socrates assures Adeimantus that a truly good man will *prefer* complete misunderstanding of his goodness by all mankind and for all time, and even the most horrible sufferings, to all the success and honors an evil man can even be imagined to win. The eight books that follow are a long argument that such a preference is reasonable. It is reasonable, because virtue is the health of the soul and a truly healthy soul can overcome any difficulty or suffering whatever. Reason in Plato's thought, it must be plain, is precisely the faculty that will *not* prostitute itself to evil ends.

"Reason" which can render its possessor superior to temptation and invincible under torture, which can see virtue as the health of the soul and the soul as superior to any conceivable disaster, is certainly more than the ability to draw conclusions from data or to construct logical arguments. Professor Niebuhr will hardly deny that such "reason," if only men could attain it, would indeed be salvation.

Perhaps we can reconcile Niebuhr with Plato if we hold that Niebuhr was writing about *reasoning*, the actual thought processes in which men do engage, while Plato included in his idea of reason a sure and correct appreciation of values that men rarely if ever achieve. It may help to make the distinction clear, if we reflect that a criminal wants a lawyer who is able to reason but certainly does not want one who is at all inclined to be reasonable. Reasonableness is easily seen to be a delicate and complex balance of emotional impulses and an uncompromising concern for truth and right.

### III

The distinction between information and appreciation closes one question only to open another. In his dialogue with Protagoras, Socrates

argued that since virtue is simply knowledge of the good, it can be taught. If by knowledge of the good we do indeed mean only information, the task of moral training is comparatively simple. We need only convey the needed information. For that we have a number of effective techniques at our command.

If it is emotion that we must train, however, the task is much more difficult. We have to admit that the techniques are not available. We have given to the training of emotion nothing like the study we have given to the imparting of information. Who will tell us how we can prove to a young person that *Les Miserables* is better worth reading than one of Mickey Spillane's thrillers? How can we *prove* that it is better to endure poverty for the truth than to grow rich by a lie?

All we can do at present is to bring our young people into contact with the things we consider beautiful and fine. We can call attention to details that seem to us most impressive. We can describe, according to our abilities, our own emotional reactions. We can clear up mistakes and confusions. We can arrange our presentations in a graded series adapted to differing levels of maturity. But when we have done that, we can only sit back and hope that beauty and goodness will evoke in the young the same emotional responses that they do in ourselves. We have to put our trust in the essential soundness and health of the emotional nature of our young people.

The Platonic-Socratic doctrine that virtue is knowledge of the good can hold its own against its critics, we have seen, if we define knowledge of the good as the correct appreciation of values, an emotional response. But is not this an irresponsible play with words? Can feeling or emotion fairly be called knowledge, or can it truthfully be said to yield knowledge? Are we not constantly warned, and rightly, that emotion only confuses judgment? Is it not the root of the most repulsive forms of bigotry and prejudice? Is emotion anything more than our response to particular stimuli? As our response, it may be of interest to psychologists, but does it tell us anything whatever about the things, the persons, the happenings, or it may be the ideas, to which we may be responding?

I like coffee. My wife does not. Is one of us wrong and the other right? Is coffee *really* "good" or "bad"? The Spartans did away with defective babies. We preserve ours with elaborate care and at great expense. Is one practice right and the other wrong? Is our judgment anything more than an expression of our liking for the one and our dislike of the other?

Does not the diversity of value judgments by individuals and by different peoples, even by the same individuals and peoples at different times, prove that such judgments have their basis only in our particular dispositions and give us no information whatever about the facts to which they refer? Is it even possible to give any definite meaning to questions about value?

Whatever we may conclude, value judgments, when we make them, certainly *feel* like judgments of fact. When the experience of value is intense, the feeling is almost irresistible that the qualities which stir us so deeply are really in the objects before us. We find it almost impossible to doubt that Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, the Venus de Milo, the Parthenon and the Taj Mahal *are* works of superlative beauty. Great mountain ranges, the starry heavens and storm-swept oceans *are* sublime. Sublime, too, as Kant observed, is the moral law in the hearts of men, with its uncompromising, "unconditional" demand for loyalty to truth and justice. In contrast cowardice and dishonesty *are* contemptible, self-righteousness *is* disgusting, cruelty hideous. As I review my own most intense experiences of value, it seems to me I detect something that I can describe only as an out-rushing of energy from myself toward the object that has aroused it, perhaps it may be only a confused and confusing blur of kinesthetic sensations and images, with the affirmation, "That is truly beautiful"—or loathsome.

Before we dismiss the experience of value as no more than our reactions, and judgments of value as unverifiable and therefore meaningless, it may be worth while to explore the possibility that the experience of value bears some such relation to reality as the experience of green does to a particular wave length of light. If that be true, the objects of our value judgments may be really beautiful or ugly, good or evil, in much the same sense as grass is really green or the sky really blue.

#### IV

A study of valuation and its emotional basis may very well be humanity's next great spiritual venture. Already the possibility appears that it may be possible to verify value judgments by methods at least roughly similar to those of science. We may appeal, that is to say, to the universality of experience, to the coherence of particular values with other values or with facts, and to the necessity for the acknowledgment of certain values if particular objectives are to be realized.

It is at least a possibility that a better understanding than we now possess of how emotional attitudes develop may lead to the discovery of an emotional normality, at least roughly comparable with the normality of sense experience upon which science rests. If psychologists of the future ever do arrive at such an understanding of human nature, it will be easy to bring about a far wider agreement upon values than we have at present.

One reason for our neglect of emotion has certainly been the astonishing success of science. Science differs from other undertakings, the late Morris Raphael Cohen pointed out, in that it "subordinates all other considerations to the ideal of certainty, exactness, universality and system." Among the "other considerations" are all values. To the scientist nothing whatever is beautiful or ugly, good or evil. Everything is, or at least may be, interesting.

We are beginning to suspect that such concentration upon one branch of our business in the world, to the neglect of the other, has been a mistake.

"If you want to kill a quarter of a million, or more, men, women, and children in one terrific BANG," our scientists have told us, "we can supply atomic, hydrogen, or cobalt bombs, or other weapons less noisy but even more frightful."

If we ask, "But *ought* we to kill so many human beings, either in one monstrous explosion or in many lesser ones?" the scientists cannot answer. The prevailing philosophy of science brusquely brushes off all questions of obligation or of value as "meaningless." The question actually seems a case of indecent exposure—as though a strip-tease performer were to interrupt the singing of a high mass by attempting to go through her act.

Because most of us have no firm confidence in any other guide than science, the main result so far of the release of nuclear energy has been ever-mounting fear. We who have accounted ourselves free and brave find ourselves burrowing frantically under ground and training little children in what they should do when the bombs begin to fall. Surely nothing more is needed to convince anyone that, despite all its splendid achievements, science is not enough.

We are beginning to see, too, that science depends upon a delicate and precarious balance of emotion. Devotion to "certainty, exactness, universality, and system," is itself a complex structure of emotions. Science, like religion, begins in renunciation of all selfish ends or preferences. Society, too, must approve and support the ideals of the scientists.

A society that pays drivers of beer trucks more than teachers of children, that rates movie stars above astronomers and millionaires above those



that are rich in thought, turns its values upside down. Sooner or later it is sure to suffer a fearful penalty. One item of that penalty will be the decline, even the disappearance of science.

If ever men do become convinced that reality possesses a dimension (or dimensions) of value-depth in addition to those in space and time, and that we become aware of that dimension through feeling and emotion, the world with which they have to do business will acquire a new and greatly enriched significance. We know it today as a world which can be understood, at least in large part. Men of later and wiser times may know it as a world to be viewed with delighted wonder and with awe.

I venture the prophecy that they will force their way beyond the mere possibilities of understanding and awe, and will see their world not merely as a world which *can* be understood or wondered at, but as one that *presses* actively and mightily to be understood and summons men no less mightily to adore its splendor—a world not only *intelligibilis et admirabilis* but one that is *intelligendus et admirandus*.

# A Brief Bibliography of Presbyterian History

THOMAS H. SPENCE, JR.

IN THIS SUCCINCT SURVEY of historical writings relating to the Presbyterian Church it is proposed to begin with Calvin, journey from Geneva to the British Isles with John Knox, and thence on to America, with a brief note of other parts of the world. Attention will be largely confined to works of a historical nature, and titles will, at times, appear in abbreviated form. The literature of the Reformed Church, Continental counterpart of what the British and Americans know as Presbyterian, constitutes a topic worthy of consideration in itself; and, besides, neither space nor the qualifications of the writer warrant its inclusion other than as herein intimated.

## I. JOHN CALVIN

Presbyterian biography is varied, ranging from Theo. Beza's life of Calvin (Geneva, 1564; Philadelphia, 1836 and 1909) to G. W. Mitchell's  $X + Y = Z$ ; or the *Sleeping Preacher* (2nd ed. New York [1877]), the story of a Cumberland Presbyterian minister who reputedly possessed what a later age has come to know as extrasensory perception. The voluminous *Jean Calvin, Les hommes et les choses de son temps*, by Emile Doumergue (7 vols., Lausanne-Neuilley, 1899-1927), is expensive and a bargain at that. Paul Henry's sometime classic apologia, *Das Leben* (3 vols., Hamburg, 1835-44), appears in English, minus certain documents, as *The Life and Times of John Calvin* (2 vols., London, 1849). Among the relatively recent and stimulating studies are R. N. Carew Hunt's *Calvin* (London [1933]), J. T. McNeill's *History and Character of Calvinism* (New York, 1954), H. Y. Reyburn's *John Calvin* (London, 1914), and Williston Walker's *John Calvin* (New York and London, 1906).

But Calvin did a rather remarkable amount of writing himself, as is apparent from the fifty-nine volumes constituting his *Opera* in the *Corpus Reformatorum* (Brunswick, 1863-1900), the earlier English version of the

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Calvin Translation Society (Edinburgh, 1844-55), and the recent Grand Rapids reprint of the latter. Bonnet's selections of Calvin's letters have long since been made available in English (4 vols., Philadelphia [1858]).

Should the reader suspect that the foregoing falls somewhat short of completeness, his attention is directed to the following: A. Erichson, *Bibliographia Calviniana* (Berlin, 1900); T. H. L. Parker, "A Bibliography and Survey of the British Study of Calvin, 1900-1940" (*Evangelical Quarterly*, XVIII, pp. 123-31); J. T. McNeill, "Thirty Years of Calvin Study" (*Church History*, XVII, pp. 207-40); and Roger Nicole's "Some Notes Towards a Bibliography of Jean Calvin" (*Summary of Proceedings, Ninth Annual Conference, American Theological Library Association*, 1955, pp. 6-19).

## II. PAN-PRESBYTERIANA

There is pressing need for a comprehensive history of the Presbyterian family. R. C. Reed's *History of the Presbyterian Churches of the World* (Philadelphia, 1905, reprint 1922) renders a service in this respect, but 1905 was a full half-century ago. *The Presbyterian Churches of Christendom*, by J. N. Ogilvie (Rev. ed., London, 1925), is more recent but must be supplemented, especially for the United States, by such a work as W. L. Lingle's elementary but enlightening *Presbyterians: Their History and Beliefs* (Rev. ed., Richmond, Va. [1951]). The two established Presbyterian propensities of division and reunion are historically displayed through a series of charts in J. V. Stephens' *The Presbyterian Churches* (Philadelphia, 1910).

The *Proceedings* of what is now known as the General Council of the Alliance of Reformed Churches throughout the World holding the Presbyterian Order cannot be disregarded. These begin with 1877 and are generally issued at three- or four-year intervals. The *Catholic Presbyterian* (London, 1879-83), *Presbyterian Register* (Edinburgh, 1886-1948), and the current *Reformed and Presbyterian World*, inaugurated at Geneva in 1949, represent a trio of successive periodicals serving as a literary voice for World-wide Presbyterianism.

## III. BRITISH ISLES AND THE COMMONWEALTH

1. *Scotland's Story.* Scots have not always been Presbyterians, nor have all Scots professing Presbyterianism always been associated with a single body. The divisions of the Scottish Church are effectively and, at times, strenuously reflected in the literature of that land. The parent body,

the Church of Scotland (Presbyterian), dates from 1560. Later organizations resulting from its main divisions are as follows: Reformed (Covenanter), 1688; Associate (Secession), 1733; Relief, 1761; and Free, 1843. These have since been involved in a number of unions, including that of the Associate Synod and Relief churches in 1847 to form the United Presbyterian Church, reaching major proportions in 1900 with the coming together of the United and greater portion of the Free Church, and culminating in the union of 1929 when most of the United Frees joined with the Church of Scotland.

*The Sources and Literature of Scottish Church History*, by M. B. MacGregor (Glasgow, 1934), is invaluable—this adjective will not be used again—for a survey of the entire field, while the first volume of A. R. Macewen's *History of the Church in Scotland* (2 vols., London, 1913-18) constitutes an extended introduction to the Reformation in that kingdom.

To the Wodrow Society, formed in 1841, scholars are indebted for readily available editions of the works of early historians of the Reformed Faith: David Calderwood, *History of the Kirk of Scotland* (8 vols., Edinburgh, 1842-49), bringing the story through 1625; John Knox, *History of the Reformation in Scotland*, largely comprising Volumes I and II of *The Works of John Knox*, edited by David Laing (6 vols., Edinburgh, 1864), closing with 1567; and John Row, *History of the Kirk of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1842), dealing with the period, 1558-1639.

Robert Wodrow, himself, contributed the informing *History of the Sufferings of the Church of Scotland* (Annotated ed., 4 vols., Glasgow, 1828-30), relating to the years 1660-88, while J. K. Hewison's *The Covenanters* (Rev. ed., Glasgow, 1913) begins with 1545 and, like Wodrow, closes with the Revolution. John Howie's heart-warming work popularly published as *Scots Worthies* (Numerous editions), and Alexander Smellie's *Men of the Covenant* (Memorial ed., London and New York, 1924), are concerned with similar subject matter. Two non-Presbyterian publications of the Spottiswoode Society supply additional early data: Bishop Robert Keith's *History of the Affairs of Church and State in Scotland* (3 vols., Edinburgh, 1844-50) and Archbishop John Spottiswoode's *History of the Church of Scotland* (3 vols., Edinburgh, 1851).

Prime sources for the mid-Seventeenth Century, especially as regards the Westminster Assembly, are *The Letters and Journals of Robert Baillie*, edited by David Laing and published by the Bannatyne Club (3 vols., Edinburgh, 1841-42).

W. M. Hetherington, in his *History of the Church of Scotland* (2 vols., Edinburgh, 1844), and Thomas McCrie, *The Story of the Scottish Church* (London, 1875), continue the narrative through the Disruption, as the incidents relating to the organization of the Free Church in 1843 are collectively characterized. Other nineteenth-century publications to be noted are Thomas Stephen's *History of the Church of Scotland* (4 vols., London, 1843-45), John Cunningham's *Church History of Scotland* (2nd ed., 2 vols., Edinburgh, 1882), and *The Church of Scotland* (5 vols., London [1890-91]), edited by R. H. Story.

J. R. Fleming's two volumes, *History of the Church in Scotland, 1843-1874*, and *1875-1929* (Edinburgh, 1927-33), supply a somewhat detailed and rounded account of life and activities through the consummation of the last union. His "Chronological Table" is a boon to all who desire to run and read at one and the same time. Dean A. P. Stanley's provokingly captivating *Lectures on the History of the Church of Scotland* (London, 1872) will interest all students and should be required reading for Presbyterians. The inclusive work on clerical biography of the Church of Scotland is Hew Scott's *Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticanæ* (New ed., 8 vols., Edinburgh, 1915-50).

There is a wealth of literature on the various branches of the Scottish Church. The formation of the heroic Reformed societies is described by Michael Shields in *Faithful Contendings Displayed* (Edinburgh, 1703), while a formal account of the Covenanter Church is found in Matthew Hutchison's *Reformed Presbyterian Church in Scotland* (Paisley, 1893), and a useful collection of data is available in W. J. Couper's *Reformed Presbyterian Church* (Edinburgh, 1925). The development of the organization which began with the ejection of Thomas Gillespie from his charge at Carnock is traced in Gavin Struthers' *History . . . of the Relief Church* (Glasgow, 1843).

The principles of the Associates are enunciated in Adam Gib's *Present Truth* (2 vols., Edinburgh, 1774), and their story told in John McKerrow's factual *History of the Secession Church* (Rev. ed., Edinburgh and London, 1845). David Scott's *Annals and Statistics of the Original Secession Church* (Edinburgh [1886]) is a ready reference on the Associates.

A participant's account of the origin of the Free Church may be found in Robert Buchanan's able defense of that exodus, *The Ten Years' Conflict* (2 vols., Glasgow, 1849), a much less committal and relatively impartial version in A. Turner's *Scottish Secession of 1843* (Edinburgh, 1859), with

the Church of Scotland's case exhibited in James Bryce's *Ten Years of the Church of Scotland* (Edinburgh and London, 1850). Congregational color and ministerial experience are jointly illustrated in Thomas Brown's *Annals of the Disruption* (New ed., Edinburgh, 1893), and a late appraisal of the Free Church movement is Hugh Watt's *Thomas Chalmers and the Disruption* (Edinburgh [1943]). For reference on ministers and congregations of the Free Church, William Ewing's *Annals of the Free Church of Scotland* (2 vols., Edinburgh, 1914), should be consulted.

Similar use may be made of William Mackelvie's *Annals and Statistics* (Edinburgh, 1873) for the United Presbyterians, and likewise of Robert Small's *History of the Congregations of the United Presbyterian Church From 1733 to 1900* (2 vols., Edinburgh, 1904). John A. Lamb's *Fasti of the United Free Church of Scotland, 1900-1929* (Edinburgh and London, 1956), is a welcome addition to its field.

Late literature on union embraces *The Kirk in Scotland, 1560-1929*, by John Buchan and G. A. Smith (n.p. [1930]), and J. R. Fleming's *Story of Church Union in Scotland* (London [1929]). Vindication of the continuing Free Church is the professed objective of *The Free Church of Scotland, 1843-1910*, by Alexander Stewart and J. K. Cameron (Edinburgh and Glasgow [1910]); while the brief—in extended form—for the United Frees who declined to enter the union of 1929 is presented in James Barr's *United Free Church of Scotland* (London, 1934), to which is appended a detailed chart illustrative of Scottish divisions and unions.

The Church of Scotland's Library and Record Room at 352 Castlehill, Edinburgh 1, is the archival center of The Kirk.

2. *England, Ireland, and Elsewhere.* It was in England, rather than Scotland, that the dominant documents of the Presbyterian order were drawn up—the *Confession of Faith*, the *Larger* and *Shorter* Catechisms, and the material now embraced in the *Book of Church Order*. *The Westminster Assembly, its History and Standards*, by A. F. Mitchell (Edinburgh, 1883), is a recognized work on the council which produced these classics. Presbyterianism, which never greatly flourished in the southern realm, is treated in A. H. Drysdale's *History of the Presbyterians in England* (London, 1889).

The activities of the Church in Ireland have been told repeatedly, as in J. S. Reid's three-volume *History of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland* (3rd ed., London, 1853), Thomas Witherow's *Historical and Literary Memorials of Presbyterianism in Ireland, First and Second Series* (London



and Belfast, 1879-80), W. D. Killen's *History of Congregations of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland* (Belfast, 1886), and W. T. Latimer's *History of the Irish Presbyterians* (2nd ed., Belfast, 1902). A series of pamphlet publications entitled *Fasti of the Irish Presbyterian Church*, prepared by James McConnell and published during the 1930's and early '40's at Belfast, and a companion compilation by David Stewart, *Fasti of the American Presbyterian Church* (Belfast, 1943), are more recent contributions of biographical value. The Historical Society of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland is located in Belfast.

Presbyterianism in the British Commonwealth is represented by William Gregg's *History of the Presbyterian Church in the Dominion of Canada* (Toronto, 1885), and J. T. McNeill's *Presbyterian Church in Canada, 1875-1925* (Toronto, 1925), James Cameron's *Centenary History of the Presbyterian Church in New South Wales* (Sydney, 1905), John Dickson's *History of the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand* (Dunedin, 1899), J. R. Elder's *History of the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand, 1840-1940* (Christchurch [1940]), and A. J. Campbell's *Fifty Years of Presbyterianism in Victoria* (Melbourne [1889]).

#### IV. PRESBYTERIANS IN THE UNITED STATES

The year 1956 marks the 250th anniversary of organized American Presbyterianism above the level of the local congregation, for it was in 1706 that the first Presbytery convened in Philadelphia. Basic among documents relating to the Church is that series beginning with the proceedings of this Presbytery (1706-1716), and continuing with those of the succeeding Synod of Philadelphia (1717-58), the dissident New Side Synod of New York (1745-58), and the Synod of New York and Philadelphia (1758-88) which was formed by the reunion of these erstwhile divided courts. These minutes have been published as the *Records of the Presbyterian Church* (Philadelphia, 1841, 1852, and 1904, the last with index). In 1789, the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., held its first meeting; and its yearly printed Minutes, though at times disappointingly abbreviated, are available from that date.

Later divisions came in the 1800's, with the Cumberland Presbyterian Church dating from 1810. In 1837-38, the General Assembly was divided into what came to be known as the Old and New School churches. The New School split in 1857, with its Southern wing assuming the name of United Synod. The Old School followed suit in 1861, when the Presbyterian

Church in the Confederate States of America was organized, to be renamed the Presbyterian Church in the United States upon the fall of the Confederacy. This Assembly was joined by the United Synod in 1864, and the Northern Old and New School bodies reunited in 1869. In 1906, another union brought a large portion of the Cumberlands into the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A. The Orthodox (1936), Bible (1938), and Upper Cumberland (1955) Presbyterian churches are all of recent origin.

Presbyterians of directly Scottish descent organized the Associate Presbytery in 1753, and that of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in 1774. Through a partial union of these, the Associate Reformed Church was formed in 1782; and, after a further series of unions, the United Presbyterian Church came into being in 1858. In the meantime, the present (Southern) Associate Reformed Church (1822) had been constituted.

1. *Presbyterian Church in the United States of America.* Standard works on Colonial Presbyterianism are those of Richard Webster, *A History of the Presbyterian Church in America* (Philadelphia, 1857), with many biographical sketches; Charles Hodge's *Constitutional History* (2 vols., Philadelphia, 1839-40); William Hill's prompt reply to Hodge in the form of his *History of the Rise, Progress, Genius, and Character of American Presbyterianism* (Washington, 1839), and C. A. Briggs' *American Presbyterianism* (New York, 1885); together with L. J. Trinterud's quite recent *Forming of an American Tradition* (Philadelphia [1949]). Charles Hanna's compendium of corporate research, *The Scotch-Irish* (2 vols., New York and London, 1902), and the *Proceedings* of the Congress of the Scotch Irish Society of America (10 vols., various places, 1889-1902) are to be reckoned with in any consideration of this period. A useful array of sources for 1783-1840 constitutes the text of W. W. Sweet's *Religion on the American Frontier, Vol. II, The Presbyterians* (New York and London, 1936), with the bonus of a particularly satisfying bibliography.

The events of 1837-38 called forth several volumes. The New School arguments are found in *A History of the Division of the Presbyterian Church*, prepared "by a Committee of the Synod of New York and New Jersey" (New York, 1852), while the Old School case is presented in S. J. Baird's *History of the New School* (Philadelphia, 1868) and *A Historical Vindication of the Abrogation of the Plan of Union*, by I. V. Brown (Philadelphia, 1855). A compilation under the title of *Presbyterian Reunion: A Memorial Volume. 1837-1871* (New York, 1870) commemorates the merger of these two bodies.

E. H. Gillett's *History of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America* (2 vols., Philadelphia [1864], and rev. ed. [1873]), G. P. Hays' *Presbyterians* (New York, 1892), with special chapters on the Reformed, United, Cumberland, and Southern Presbyterian churches, R. E. Thompson's *History of the Presbyterian Churches* (New York, 1895), in the American Church History Series, and J. H. Patton's *Popular History* (New York, 1903) represent treatments along general lines. A substantial sequel to these is L. A. Loetscher's *The Broadening Church* (Philadelphia, 1954), developed around several classic controversies following the union of 1869, and closing with a discussion of that which led to the organization of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church. The still more recent *The Presbyterian Enterprise*, edited by M. W. Armstrong, L. A. Loetscher, and C. A. Anderson (Philadelphia [1956]), is a convenient collection of sources.

The Presbyterian Historical Society (Department of History) in the Witherspoon Building, Philadelphia, is a great storehouse of things Presbyterian. Its card catalogue is perhaps the best bibliography on American Presbyterianism in existence. Many Western records have been assembled at San Francisco Seminary in San Anselmo, California.

2. *Presbyterian Church in the United States*. T. C. Johnson's vigorous *History of the Southern Presbyterian Church* (New York, 1894), a separate imprint of the American Church History Series, which also appears in Volume XI of that publication, is severely restricted in usefulness by its relatively early date of publication. Much of the earlier history of the Presbyterian Church, U.S., has been set down in the lives of its leaders: *The Life and Letters of James Henley Thornwell*, by B. M. Palmer (Richmond [1875]); Dr. Johnson's lives of *Robert Lewis Dabney* (Richmond [1903]), and of *Benjamin Morgan Palmer* (Richmond [1906]); *Moses Drury Hoge*, by Peyton H. Hoge (Richmond [1899]); and J. G. McAllister's *Life and Letters of Walter W. Moore* (Richmond, 1939). None of the first four, however, more than touches the twentieth century, and the fifth closes with 1927. The need for an up-to-date history of the Southern Church is obvious.

Probably Presbyterianism's most extensive work is the manuscript *History of Churches and Woman's Work of the Presbyterian Church in the United States*, currently filed in 1,400 volumes at the Historical Foundation, Montreat, North Carolina, where the archives of that Church, as well as those of the Associate Reformed Presbyterians, are located. Detailed information on these archival materials may be obtained from the author's

*Survey of Records and Minutes* (Montreat, 1943) and his *Historical Foundation and Its Treasures* (Montreat, 1956). A large collection of manuscript and printed Minutes has also been gathered in the Library of Union Theological Seminary, Richmond, Virginia.

3. *Other American Bodies.* The story of the United Presbyterian Church is told in J. B. Scouller's *History* in Volume XI of the American Church History Series (New York, 1894), and sketchily set forth in that author's *Manual of the United Presbyterian Church* (Harrisburg, Pa., 1881, and rev. ed., Pittsburgh, 1887), and W. M. Glasgow's *Cyclopedic Manual* (Pittsburgh, 1903). The United Presbyterian archives are located at Pittsburgh-Xenia Seminary, in Pittsburgh. The Cumberland Church is represented by J. V. Stephens' *Genesis* (Cincinnati, 1941), B. W. McDonnold's *History* (4th ed., Nashville, Tenn., 1899), and T. H. Campbell's *Studies in Cumberland Presbyterian History* (Nashville, 1944); the Associate Reformed Church by Robert Lathan's *History of the Associate Reformed Synod of the South* (Harrisburg, Pa., 1882), which also supplies a good account of the early Associate and Reformed groups, and by its *Sesquicentennial History* (Clinton, S. C., 1951); the Reformed Presbyterian Church by W. M. Glasgow's *History* (Baltimore, 1888); and D. J. Williams' *One Hundred Years of Welsh Calvinistic Methodism in America* (Philadelphia, 1937), despite its name, concerns a Presbyterian body which united with the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., in 1920.

N. B. Stonehouse's biography, *J. Gresham Machen* (Grand Rapids, 1954), describes the beginnings of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church; but the writer knows of no volume doing similar service for the Bible Presbyterian Church. D. W. Wiman's unpublished thesis, "A History of the Colored Cumberland Presbyterian Church" (Cumberland Presbyterian Theological Seminary, McKenzie, Tenn., 1396), concerns that organization, which was set off from the Cumberland Church in 1869.

4. *Biographical Collections.* W. B. Sprague's *Annals of the American Pulpit*, Volumes III, IV, and IX (New York, 1858 and 1869) are recognized sources for data on early American ministers, while the *Presbyterian Historical Almanac* supplies sketches of certain clergymen of its era, 1858-68. W. J. Beecher's *Index of Presbyterian Ministers* (Philadelphia [1883]) facilitates reference to individuals in the Minutes of the U.S.A. General Assembly, and E. S. Robinson's *Ministerial Directory* (Oxford, Ohio, 1898) includes U.S.A. and U.S. ministers living at that time. The largely biographical *Encyclopaedia of the Presbyterian Church*, edited by Alfred Nevin

(Philadelphia, 1884), brings together much material not concentrated elsewhere, and goes to strange lengths to avoid any tinge of sectionalism.

The *Ministerial Directory of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.*, by E. C. Scott (Austin, Texas, 1942, and 2nd ed., Atlanta, Ga., 1950) is pre-eminent as an example of concise biographical and bibliographical compilation. The *Sesquicentennial History* of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church carries congregational sketches as well as those of ministers, while W. M. Glasgow's *Cyclopedic Manual* supplies similar, though less extensive, data for the United Presbyterians, as well as for the earlier Associate and Reformed bodies. The same compiler's *History of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in America* is extensively devoted to this type of notes, and its biographical feature is continued in O. F. Thompson's *Sketches of the Ministers of the Reformed Presbyterian Church* (Blanchard, Iowa [1930]). Richard Beard's *Brief Biographical Sketches* (Nashville, Tenn., 1867) and *Second Series* (Nashville, 1874) concern a total of forty-one early Cumberland Presbyterian ministers. Obituary sketches in the printed Minutes of Presbyterian courts serve as valuable supplements to these formal works, as is also true of biographical catalogues of educational institutions.

5. *Presbyterian Press*. Presbyterian periodicals published in the United States present a picture of church life not to be found in printed volumes and, moreover, bring history down to the present time. Such papers of the general news type as are currently circulated, together with their dates of establishment, or those of definite forerunners, include the *Associate Presbyterian Magazine* (1858), *Associate Reformed Presbyterian* (1850), *Christian Beacon* (1936), *Christian Observer* (1813), *Covenanter Witness* (1928), *Cumberland Flag* (1926), *Cumberland Presbyterian* (1830), *Kingdom Herald* (1954), *Presbyterian Guardian* (1935), *Presbyterian Life* (1948), *Presbyterian Outlook* (1819), *Reformed Presbyterian Advocate* (1867), *Southern Presbyterian Journal* (1942), *United Presbyterian* (1842).

Prominent among the scholarly publications of the past were the *Princeton, Presbyterian and Reformed*, and *Princeton Theological Reviews*, which all but covered the years 1825-1929, and the *Southern Presbyterian Review* (1847-85). Somewhat similar current magazines are *Interpretation* (1947), *Theology Today* (1944), and the *Westminster Theological Journal* (1938). Since 1901, the *Journal of the Presbyterian Historical Society* has concerned itself with the publication of Presbyterian documents.

Many significant titles have necessarily been omitted but it is hoped that enough have been included to constitute an adequate outline.

## "Sex in Christianity and Psychoanalysis"

URSULA M. NIEBUHR

CHRISTIANITY and psychoanalytic theory share many areas and subjects of concern. Because of this, exponents of each look at the approaches and findings of the other with critical interest, sometimes with apprehension or suspicion.

For this reason, those who like their worlds to be friendly will welcome two recent books: *Sex in Christianity and Psychoanalysis*, by William Graham Cole,<sup>1</sup> and *Christian Life and the Unconscious*, by Ernest White.<sup>2</sup> The professional callings of the two authors bear witness to the quality of their interest. Mr. Cole is Chaplain, and also teaches, at Williams College, and has behind him the pastoral experience both of university and parish. Dr. White is an English physician who for many years has combined psychiatry with his general practice. He is on the staff of the City Temple, the London church of the well-known Methodist clergyman, Dr. Leslie D. Weatherhead.

Mr. Cole tackles the important and complicated subject of sex, first as interpreted in Christian theology and by Christian theologians past and present, and then as understood according to psychoanalytic theory today. Dr. White, "in plain language," to quote his own preface, explains in Christian terms the psychological processes involved in psychiatric understanding and treatment. Ministers will find both books useful. Mr. Cole's book, giving a summary of historical background and contemporary discussion, would be suitable to recommend to teachers, parents and others engaged in social or educational work. Dr. White's book should dispel the doubts or suspicions of those to whom psychological explanation or psychiatric treatment is unfamiliar. It would be useful to have on hand to lend worried or interested parishioners.

Mr. Cole's book is the more ambitious and more weighty of the two.

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<sup>1</sup> New York: Oxford University Press, 1955. xiv-329 pp. \$4.00.

<sup>2</sup> New York: Harper & Brothers, 1956. 190 pp. \$3.00.

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URSULA M. NIEBUHR (Mrs. Reinhold Niebuhr), M.A., S.T.M., D.D., is Executive Officer of the Department of Religion, Barnard College, Columbia University, New York City. She discusses issues raised by some recent work in the field of Christianity and depth psychology.



The subject is large and his title and interest far-reaching. Naturally, therefore, he is bound to leave some gaps as well as to expose many areas where questions arise and abide. Some will find his treatment rather summary; others will find his choice of representative thinkers somewhat arbitrary. Those to whom the material is neither too well known nor easily available may find his summaries useful. Those who share his interest and also have some acquaintance with the material may react to some of his categories of generalization. Such readers no doubt also would wish that Mr. Cole had quoted or given exact references more often, rather than repeating his own interpretations and generalizations.

Mr. Cole starts his survey of attitudes toward sex with the New Testament. His thesis is that Christianity, when true to its Hebrew parentage, is healthy and positive about sex. From its first days on, unfortunately, Christianity has been corrupted philosophically by the metaphysical dualism of the Hellenistic world into which it came. This alien culture bequeathed the categories of separation which have haunted not only Christian theology, but also much of the explanation of the Western philosophical tradition. This metaphysical dualism, implicit in Platonic idealism, may have been derived from Pythagoreanism, from the mysteries of Persia and Egypt, and from the mysticism of the further East. According to its categories of separation, however, the world of Being is divided from the world of Becoming, Eternity from History, the Idea from the Substantial Fact, Mind from Body, Spirit from Flesh.

On the other hand, Hebrew attitudes about sex and Hebrew language about the body was healthy and matter-of-fact. The Hebrews of the Old Testament described human experience in psychosomatic terms, generally and descriptively if not exactly, but none the less vigorously. In other words the Hebrew thought with his innards, and he felt with his guts.

This reading of the Hebrew attitude as opposed to the Hellenistic is generally borne out by the evidence of the literature. Biblical scholarship for the last decades has done much to show what we owe to this Hebrew strain in our culture. But words and their meanings change. Hebrew words were translated into Greek, and the weight and balance of human consciousness was described differently. This process can be seen in the New Testament. St. Paul, however much he feels and thinks as a Jew, nevertheless writes in Greek. In his epistle to the Galatians he equates "living under the law" with the "fleshly" or "carnal" state. This equation is made in terms of opposition to living "in the spirit," or "in freedom,"

or "in grace," so it is easy to understand on grounds both of logic and psychology. But St. Paul's words about "the body of this death" helped to lay the groundwork for much of later Christian dualism or pessimism about the body.

Mr. Cole summarizes this period fairly well, if necessarily somewhat generally. It is a little strange to find the Hebrew inheritance described as "naturalism." Mr. Cole uses this word to signify the positive acceptance of creation. Accordingly, he describes St. Paul as one whose "Jewish naturalism was debased by his cosmopolitanism." This cosmopolitanism was Hellenistic dualism. If this was so with St. Paul, it was even more so with the great Christian theologians Augustine and Aquinas. "Oriental dualism though successfully resisted by the Church in the theological arena, carried the day in the struggle of the interpretation of sex. The naturalism of both Judaism and Greek classicism found that the thumbs of the crowd were turned down."

Mr. Cole continues his survey of theological attitudes on sex by summarizing the thought of Luther and Calvin. Next he turns to consider some representative Protestant and Catholic interpretations. Part II follows with a summary of Freud and of some of the contributions of today, including the well known neo-Freudian the late Karen Horney, and of two semi-deviationists, Franz Alexander and Sandor Rado.

This part of the book is hard to judge. Almost any summary of Freudian thought is bound to be unsatisfactory to someone else. The general reader, because much of the material has not been too easily accessible, also is hampered by the lack of clinical knowledge and experience which underlay both Freud's own formulations as well as later applications of his principles and methods; and as a result, is apt to interpret careful definitions and distinctions too generally.

Mr. Cole obviously has been impressed by the neo-Freudians. This attitude others may not share. Indeed, many would argue that these revisionists have turned Freudian theory upside down. The interpretation of Karen Horney, H. Stack Sullivan, E. Fromm, etc., has shifted the center of inquiry from the biological to the cultural level; from the individual understood in terms of primary instincts—particularly sexuality—to the conditioning environment. Thus the individual is described as a "total personality" (Fromm), interacting in "interpersonal relations," rather than regarded in terms of his biological structure, his infancy and childhood, and his psychosomatic conditions. This shift in emphasis ignores

the fact, as Herbert Marcuse points out in *Eros and Civilization*, that "the decisive relations are those which are the least interpersonal." All of this is of great importance to any discussion of sex attitude.

Mr. Cole also mentions "that Jung and some of the contemporary analysts who recognize the presence of positive and creative stirrings in the human psyche are closer to Christianity than Freud." This comment, although casually made, demands both note and question. It is true that Freud criticizes and disbelieves the fact of religion. It is true that Jung uses a plethora of religious terminology, and that he wrote a book entitled *Modern Man in Search of a Soul*. But Mr. Cole is speaking of human freedom.

Jung's system of Gnostic theosophy describes the psyche and the process of individuation in many and various ways, and also the idea of God in this system assumes many and various shapes. But as in the Gnostic systems of Hellenism which it so resembles (the very Hellenism which bequeathed the *damnosa hereditas* of dualism to the Christian tradition), there is no real freedom. There is the force of the Collective Unconscious, part of which may have the shape of God, or sometimes of the devil; and at most, the experiencing the Idea of the Numinous may help the Ego Consciousness to relate itself to the Collective Unconscious. On the other hand, if the Freudian sequence of the unconscious—infantile sexuality, repression, conflict and transference—be accepted, then, as Edward Glover remarked in his book, *Freud or Jung*, this "psychic determinism of Freud at least permits man to hope that in the unending struggle between id-impulse and ego-adaptation, the victories gained during early development may stand him in good stead. Even if the amount of 'freed-will' accruing is only marginal, it at any rate allows man the freedom to decide to continue the struggle."

Mr. Cole's purpose, however, is not to give the final word on these and other aspects of this most far-reaching subject. Instead, he is anxious, presumably, to introduce and commend the positive contributions of Christianity and psychoanalytic theory, while at the same time showing the historical reasons for the prurience, asceticism and moralism of much of traditional Christianity which has so often contradicted its presuppositions and obscured its good news. Thus it may be academic to be critical of so many of Mr. Cole's incidental statements. Yet he belongs to an academic community, so must stand the professional discipline of his group.

Thus, for example, students of the Old Testament would be startled

to have the absence of any ban on fornication (i.e., premarital unchastity) in the Law described as "glaring." In Hebrew society of biblical times the virginity of woman was part of the family's property rights, of its "stock-in-trade." Thus the practical prohibition is found in Exodus 22:16 and Deuteronomy 22:28 f. in the context of violations of property rights. "If a man seduces a virgin who is not betrothed and lies with her, he should give the marriage gift for her and make her his wife." The weight of this provision down the centuries is reflected by the fact that Philo repeats it,<sup>3</sup> repeating the deuteronomic judgment that "because he had humbled her, he can never divorce her."

The third part of the book is entitled "A Critical Reconstruction of Christian Interpretations of Sex." In these last pages, the author repeats some of the interpretive remarks made earlier; considers the relation of Christianity to the behavioral sciences; refers to the (first) Kinsey Report and other documents, and concludes by summarizing the Christian doctrines of creation, sin and redemption in terms relevant to the subject of sex.

It might have been better to say either more on some of these subjects, or not so much. For the question which underlies much of the discussion in this book needs both careful and disciplined thought and expression. This question is of the interplay between the forces of social and cultural conditioning and the individual person. Climate of opinion may account for much, but does it account for everything? "Human nature," we say, "will out," despite prevailing molds of thought and modes of social behavior. But what do we mean by human nature? Is it not the human person in his singular and intractable particularity who stands against his environment? The Bible, and other great literature, reminds us of those who had the moral courage or the inner strength to face both the historical circumstances of their day and also the mystery of their own selves. Does not psychoanalytic theory derived from Freud also witness to a biological self which is not co-extensive with the socially conditioned self?

This question, as Professor Lionel Trilling in his Freud Anniversary Lecture for 1955 has expounded for us, is important, even crucial, today. It is especially relevant to any discussion of sex and sex attitudes. Mr. Cole at times seems to suggest that cultural influences, as for example of Hellenistic dualism, account for everything. Is there not something more basic to every individual than cultural influences? The fact of his or her

<sup>3</sup> *Spec.: Leg.*: 3, 11, 70.

own sexuality, is not this the point? Surely this is where all the other questions come home.

Two recent but very useful books in this field Mr. Cole does not seem to have used. One is *Hebrew Marriage*,<sup>4</sup> by David R. Mace, published in 1953. Professor Mace, well known for his work in the Marriage Guidance movement in England, is now teaching in this country at Drew University. The other, published in 1952, both in this country and in England, is by D. Sherwin Bailey, and is called *The Mystery of Love and Marriage: A Study in the Theology of Sexual Relations*.<sup>5</sup> Dr. Sherwin Bailey, who is now secretary of the Church of England Moral Welfare Council, has also quite recently published an exhaustive study on homosexuality. The fact of books such as these, as of Mr. Cole's, is good news for all those in our day whose interest is directed by their need, and whose need is met by the interests of others.

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<sup>4</sup> *Hebrew Marriage: A Sociological Study*. Philosophical Library (Epworth), 1953.

<sup>5</sup> Harper & Brothers, 1952.

## Book Reviews

**History of Christianity 1650-1950: Secularization of the West.** By JAMES HASTINGS NICHOLS. New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1956. vi-509 pp. \$5.00.

This is a book to which many of us have been eagerly looking forward. Now that it has appeared, I for one am not disappointed in it. We are singularly lacking in histories of Christianity which survey comprehensively the course of that faith in the most recent centuries. To be sure, there is not quite such a dearth as Dr. Nichols would have us believe. But in the main, histories of the Church do not take the story much beyond the eighteenth and the fore part of the nineteenth century.

Yet in some ways the last three centuries are the most important in the entire record. They witness a paradox which is extraordinarily thought-provoking to those who would attempt to understand the fashion in which the gospel operates. On the one hand, as Dr. Nichols reminds us in his subtitle, they have seen the apparent secularization of what we once called Christendom. So striking has it been that some observers call ours the post-Christian era. On the other hand, geographically Christianity is more widely spread than it or any other religion has ever been, and within it great tides of life have been surging. It is to provide background to the current scene that the author has written. What he has given us is not a full-scale account. That must wait for his or others' hands. We have here a handbook, highly condensed, replete with facts, yet readable and with penetrating, incisive appraisals.

The date of beginning is determined by the end of the wars of religion which fixed the European boundaries between Protestantism and the Roman Catholic Church. The concluding year is as far as the author could well bring his account.

The book opens with a brief chapter which outlines the main trends in the three centuries as the author sees them. It gives a useful perspective to the succinct array of data with which he has crowded his pages. Then follows an approximate fifth of the volume which carries the narrative to the French Revolution. The choice of the year 1870 rather than 1815 for a dividing point can be questioned. To some of us the latter year appears to be more of a watershed. To the eight decades from 1789 to 1870 another fifth is devoted. Slightly more than a fifth is assigned to the generation from 1870 to World War I, and the remainder to the years since 1914 and to an extensive and highly useful bibliography.

Within the brief compass of a little more than 450 pages Dr. Nichols has endeavored to cover all the main branches of the Church—Protestant, Roman Catholic, and Eastern (especially Russian), and the entire globe. Most of the space is allocated to Europe, but there are also chapters on the United States and at least a nodding recognition of the rest of the world. There are sections on the world-wide spread of the faith and on the rise of the "younger churches." Much attention is paid to theological development and to changes in organization. Something is said of the social application of Christianity. The author sees Protestantism as having made a more successful cultural integration with the modern world than have the other branches of the faith, and as not in such striking cross-purposes with that world as is the Roman Catholic Church. There is a chapter on the Ecumenical Movement.



In as condensed an account as Dr. Nichols has deliberately written, judgments as to what should be included and what omitted will inevitably differ. Why, however, when a chapter is assigned to "Roman Catholic Theological Liberalism," is it devoted almost completely to the Modernist movement of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, while nothing is said of the earlier attempts, also condemned by Rome, of Hermes, Günther and others, to present the Catholic faith in a way which would appeal to the modern mind? Except for Kierkegaard and Grundtvig, nineteenth-century Scandinavia is passed by with only the most cursory notice. We are given very little on the revivals, both pietist and of confessional orthodoxy, in European Lutheranism, and yet they were major factors in Lutheran life in Europe, the Americas, and Lutheran missions in Asia and Africa. There is practically nothing on the revival of Roman Catholic monasticism, either in the renewal of the older orders and congregations or the amazing fertility in new congregations. Similarly one misses any mention of the Catholic devotional life which found expression in the *Curé of Ars*, the appearances of Mary, and the Eucharistic Congresses. And why is there no naming of the seventh Earl of Shaftesbury or of Henri Dunant and the Red Cross? Unhappily, the index is woefully inadequate in a book which abounds in names.

When these strictures have been made, it must be said in the same breath that here is an excellent book, one which will be widely welcomed and extensively used.

KENNETH SCOTT LATOURETTE

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**Christianity and the State in the Light of History.** By T. M. PARKER. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1956. vii-178 pp. \$3.00.

**The State in the New Testament.** By OSCAR CULLMANN. New York: Chas. Scribner's Sons, 1956. xi-123 pp. \$2.50.

**Caesar the Beloved Enemy.** By M. A. C. WARREN. London: Student Christian Movement Press (Alec Allenson, Chicago), 1955. 94 pp. \$1.00.

# I

Of these three books dealing diversely with subjects in the wide field of Christianity and the state, Parker's Bampton Lectures cover the most extensive range in time, from the biblical conceptions through the Reformation crisis. With sound knowledge of the significant sources and wise use of modern studies, the author has produced a valuable guide to fact and thought upon the interrelations of the religious and the political phases of the Mediterranean-European society. To a remarkable degree Parker is at the same time dependable in his main positions and freshly suggestive in his presentation of them.

From a keen understanding of the essential unity of the earlier societies, and of biblical ideas on church and state, this book moves successively through the periods before and after Constantine, analyzes the Byzantine theocratic system, and studies the relations of the Western Church to the world of the barbarian kingdoms. The attempt to establish a theocratic regime under the Papacy is thoughtfully treated, and among Parker's most interesting chapters are those on the summit of the papal claims, and the troubled decline into schisms, each church still holding in some form to the ideal of a theocracy.

Men live in a single organization of society which has its political and religious aspects. If the ideal of harmonious unity was not realized, which aspect, which group of specialized leaders, should dominate the entity? In forms varying from Rome to Byzantium, and later in Germany, in Geneva, in France and in England, that is the continuing question.

Needless to say, earthly power is usually in the hands of the worldly system. But, as Parker ably shows, the attempt of Constantine, Charlemagne, and lesser princes to rule Christians brought them always within the range of authority exercised by their pastors, confessors and spiritual counselors; while the failure of the Roman municipal system drew the elected bishops into government, and later the feudalization of society developed the bishop who was also baron, or the cadet whom the baron pushed into the episcopate to wield revenues and even armies. The efforts of Hildebrand, Innocent III, and company, to win a high place for the Papacy—unfortunate as its consequences became—was first of all a struggle to appoint religious men to spiritual functions. Not until the Reformation was well developed was "the conception of an identity of Christian Church and Christian State" broken down—more by events than by mind—into the idea of secular states within which churches exist as voluntary associations.

A summary review fails to show the author's sprightly use of quotations, and his skilled mingling of the concrete instance with wise generalization. In sixteen and more centuries there is much to dispute over, but Parker will be challenged thankfully more often than resentfully.

## II

Cullmann finds that the provisional character of the State is the key to the apparent dualism of the merit ascribed to it in Romans and the enmity shown to it in Revelation. The problem of the State arises radically and centrally in the Gospels, he holds, because Jesus was executed as a rebel. Cullmann thinks that "for Jesus the Zealot ideal constituted the true temptation," an issue continually with him in the person of Simon the Zealot, probably in Judas Iscariot and Peter, possibly in the sons of Zebedee. Although the Zealot appeal to bring in the Kingdom by human power was repelled as Satanic, Jesus was ready to give even to the hated alien State its own in taxes and compliance. But the Christian was not to devote to the State the faith and life that belonged to God. Cullmann finds that Paul has the same conception as Jesus, of the State to be respected in its proper sphere, but kept within the bounds set by God. The Apocalypse has to deal with excesses of the State and is severely hostile.

All this is developed in careful, if sometimes bold exegesis, and in theological interpretation worthy of the Professor in the Faculties of Basel and of Paris, author of *Christ and Time*. Not alone New Testament scholarship, but also experience of Nazi totalitarianism have brought Cullmann to his claim of Christian consistency: "According as the State remains within its limits or transgresses them, the Christian will describe it as the servant of God or as the instrument of the Devil." Incidentally, Cullmann's wisdom may well be illustrated by the following: "The fountainhead of all Biblical interpretation and of all heresy is invariably the isolation and the absolutising of one single passage. This applies most especially to the interpretation of Romans 13:1 ff."

## III

Dr. Warren, Secretary of the Church Missionary Society and one of the most reflectively studious of ecumenical writers on missions and related theological concerns, has effectively pointed out, drawing on the published thought of Indians, that

"imperialism" with all its abuses and troubles is not the pure evil so often assumed. The integration of peoples, with gains in social order and in cultural development, we find to be good in the Greco-Roman world and in other historic consolidations which involve subordination. The problems of our own world are still with us and the accidental or temporary subordination should give way to free association, rather than to fragmentation by isolating independence. Warren also considers most helpfully the function and the difficulties of Western missionaries in the current revolt of Asia and Africa against the West. Equally suggestive is an essay on the function of the Church in the Social Service State. An alert little book, which gains perspective by Christian and truthful challenge to common American assumptions, all in courteous frankness.

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**Essays Philosophical and Theological.** By RUDOLF BULTMANN. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1956. xi-337 pp. \$4.75.

**An Existentialist Theology: A Comparison of Heidegger and Bultmann.** By JOHN MACQUARRIE. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1955. xii-252 pp. \$3.75.

The controversy over Bultmann's "demythologizing" of the New Testament has perhaps tended to obscure the importance of his attempt to bring the Bible into fresh relevance to contemporary philosophy. While Barth has claimed to expound the biblical theology in its own setting, with a *contemptus philosophiae*, Bultmann takes the questions of existential philosophy to the Bible for answer. There is always danger of putting the wrong questions to the biblical writers, as many philosophers have done in seeking a rational *Weltanschauung*, and Bultmann does not always escape it. The risk is that we may be too selective and ignore those parts of the biblical text which do not seem to be concerned with answering the questions put, but which are nonetheless genuine aspects of biblical thought. When this occurs even the most careful exegesis is inadequate, however suggestive it may be.

The *Essays*, written over the last twenty-five years and excellently translated by James Greig, deal with classical studies (Sophocles' *Antigone*), history, and sociology. But the approach is always existential, as though the author were trying out his main thesis with all kinds of material. It is interesting, in view of Macquarrie's stress on Bultmann's dependence on Heidegger, that there are only two references to Heidegger in the volume.

The two books are concerned with the crisis of belief in our time, they analyze this crisis along existential lines, they identify this analysis with the New Testament approach to the human problem, and they present the biblical answer to the dilemma of modern man. It is in this last step that Bultmann goes beyond the existential critiques of Heidegger and Sartre. These two philosophers probe the basic anxiety of man, but Sartre calls for man to assert himself heroically in the face of despair, while Heidegger asks man to accept "nothingness" and yet to recover his authentic self by flight from the crowd into those original possibilities of the human personality which he has lost. Bultmann, however, turns to the Bible for a way out of the impasse, and finds it in the biblical message that God has made man for communion with himself.

This is what gives his writing a fresh relevance; but it requires us to study the questions which the existentialists are asking. Professor Macquarrie clarifies them

for us, and from his exceptionally lucid exposition emerges a picture of the situation of modern man.

A human being differs from physical objects in being conscious of himself as belonging and yet not belonging to the "world," and it is this which gives rise to the anxiety (*Angst*) which man feels about his own life, since he cannot escape the world and yet cannot live with satisfaction in it. What it is that threatens him he cannot define, but it is felt as a threat to his very being. He is, and he has to be, as an individual *cast into* the world, and be aware of possibilities for himself but also of the way in which existence circumscribes those possibilities. A part of this very existence is that other people are also there, and that they are not just objects but subjects like himself, so that they cannot be treated in the same way as things. To treat them as such is to depersonalize them—and also to depersonalize oneself, for social relation is not something added to one's nature but integral to our nature itself. In his protest against depersonalization, the individual tries to assert himself at the point where none other can substitute for him: in the area of personal responsibility in decision. Here is the essence of the existentialist's extreme individualism. The alternative is to flee the problem by an immersion in the realm of gadgets and physical things, or into the mass public, to try to forget his authentic self in its transcendence and its aloneness.

The fact of death thus stands as the final symbol of the inextinguishable individuality of a person: no one can substitute here, or taste of death vicariously. It reduces to absurdity all of man's efforts to elude the fact of his own selfhood and the danger of the loss of that selfhood. Yet it is at this very point that the difference between Heidegger's "acceptance of nothingness" and Bultmann's Christian faith that "death is swallowed up in victory" becomes clear. Which of these attitudes is, after all, authentic existence?

The questions put to the Christian theologian by the existentialist thinker have their counterpart in the New Testament. Macquarrie shows how Bultmann uses biblical terminology not as a scientific or cosmological account of the universe and man, but as a statement of the existential situation. Such concepts as creatureliness and sin, freedom from the world even while in the world, flesh and spirit, death as the fruit of sin, are not used for philosophic speculation, but as a means of bringing home to man his inescapable responsibility before God. To this theme Bultmann returns again and again in the *Essays*, as well as in his *Theology of the New Testament*, which is the main source used by Macquarrie.

But for Bultmann the New Testament holds the answer to these questions. In Christ man becomes a "new creature." "Dying to sin" and to the "world," a man finds again his authentic self in fellowship with God through Christ, he gains a rebirth of freedom. But this is not presented as a theory to be believed. It is an experience to be accepted—the experience of being forgiven by God. The difficulty in all this is, of course, that the Bible states as objective facts what Bultmann treats as subjective experiences; that events recorded as having taken place in Palestine at a given time are handled by him as though they were but symbols of man's personal struggle and deliverance. That the two orders of fact are not separate is clear, but whether the historical objectivity can be demythologized into existential personal terms is not so clear. And Macquarrie has some very pertinent criticisms to offer at this point, as well as on the failure of Bultmann to give due weight to the importance of the Christian community in the life of the believer, to the presence of the Holy Spirit, or to the historical reality of Jesus Christ's career.

Such criticisms point to the risk of approaching the Bible with some preconceived

philosophical position. Macquarrie is cautious in claiming only that "there is some sympathy and affinity" between the two, but he does point to the important difference between the concern of the Bible with man standing before God, and the modern philosophical attempt to speculate in detached fashion about God and the world. In this sense there is a "pragmatic" quality in biblical thinking, that stands closer to the present-day awareness of impending tragedy before which man feels helpless. The good news of Jesus Christ was not an essay in metaphysics, but an urgent reminder that the human situation is desperate until man turns to God and recovers the springs of his own life.

But the Bible is also a record of events that took place two thousand and more years ago, and these cannot be absorbed into "repeatable authentic possibilities" for men in other ages. There is surely a confusion at this point. Heidegger offers an analysis of the term "historical" as the surviving relevant meaning of past events, and Bultmann seems to follow him. But despite this, and even though we may grant that past occurrences gain their meaning only as they are related to *some* contemporary experience, there still remains some distinction between my existential moment and that of the historic actor (Jesus or Paul, for instance). To deny this would be to deny the very individual peculiarity of experience on which existentialism lays so much emphasis. If this is lost in the concept of repeatability, individuality goes with it. Far from neglecting the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, as Macquarrie warns, Bultmann would then be achieving a fusion of the individual self with the Holy Spirit. Such a fusion would destroy the very foundations of existentialism.

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**Christian Eschatology and Social Thought.** By RAY C. PETRY. New York: Abingdon Press, 1956. 415 pp. \$5.00.

*Eschatology* is a word that has always had a place in textbooks of theology. It attracted the attention of ordinary newspaper readers when the Second Assembly of the World Council of Churches met at Evanston in 1954. Some people were surprised that modern Christians were talking so seriously of the Last Judgment, the return of Christ, and the eternal Kingdom of God. Others were annoyed at the indulgence in theological vocabulary. Still others pitched into the debates with vigor.

Some of those debates were valuable. Some of them were completely unnecessary. This latest book by the able professor of church history at Duke University shows the uselessness of all arguments which assume that interest in heaven must necessarily devitalize activity on earth. We need not, he says, choose between social concern and concern for the heavenly community; and he piles up evidence to show that in classical Christian thought "these eternal and temporal concerns have consistently been interlaced."

Professor Petry's book is a major work of scholarship. It makes no concessions to the casual reader. The subtitle, which correctly describes the book, gives a sample of the careful accuracy and the formal literary style of the author: "A Historical Essay on the Social Implications of Some Selected Aspects in Christian Eschatology to A.D. 1500." The chapters are carefully organized, but no subheads or typographical devices display the outline; the reader must dig it out of the content. The book has to sustain interest solely by the scholarly materials it turns up; the fact that

it succeeds as well as it does is a tribute to the author's thorough researches and his understanding of his sources.

The book unfolds in logical fashion. Two chapters define the problem and the principal issues involved. Then a series of four chapters traces "The Response of Temporal Society to the Eternal Kingdom" from the teaching of Jesus until the late Middle Ages. Here the author shows the many ways in which the church sought to mold human society in the light of its belief in a heavenly society. Then six chapters describe "The Ecclesiastical Community as Servant of the Eternal Kingdom in the Temporal World." Here Petry shows how the sacraments, the ecclesiastical hierarchy, and other aspects of the church were modeled upon the belief in the eternal divine society. Two chapters, devoted to the "End of History," deal with the theological issues at stake and the thought of some of the church fathers. The concluding two chapters, then, express something of the author's convictions.

Petry, stating his own belief, says, "The genius of Christian eschatology consists in its being conscious of society primarily in terms of the heavenly *patria*, not of the earthly community." And his advice for today is that "the key to a genuine recovery of historical Christian community may lie in the reappropriation of a positive eschatology sprung out of Christian *agape*."

Too thorough and rigorous to gain wide popularity, this book can be expected to impress scholars and theologians, some of whom may popularize its findings. Petry shows magnificent knowledge of patristic and medieval figures too often neglected by Protestants. His sixteen-page bibliography alone is a valuable piece of work, and his entire book shows the studies of a man who knows well what he is talking about.

The main limitation of the book is also its strength. Petry accepts his sources at face value. For example, he writes, "The hierarchical Church on earth answered to the celestial ordering that was invigorated by the Trinity and exemplified among the angels." And he shows how often and how thoroughly the church made this point. He does not indulge in the speculation that any sociologist would make before even assembling the materials; that the exact converse of the quoted sentence is true—that the celestial ordering is already a projection of the earthly hierarchy. Petry's evidence shows, without exactly saying so, that such a speculation is probably too glib; but he leaves it to others to decide how much truth there may be in it. He sticks to his job of elaborating a thesis by a truly impressive examination of sources.

ROGER L. SHINN

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**Luther: Letters of Spiritual Counsel.** Volume XVIII, *The Library of Christian Classics*. Ed. by THEODORE G. TAPPERT. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1955. 367 pp. \$5.00.

**Luther: An Authentic Life Story.** By RUDOLF THIEL. Trans. by Gustav K. Wiencke. Philadelphia: The Muhlenberg Press, 1955. xiii-492 pp. \$5.00.

These two volumes have several things in common. Each of them is a part of the Luther renaissance that began years ago in the Scandinavian lands and Germany and has now come to the English-speaking world. Each presents its message in largest measure through the very words of Luther himself. And each leads the reader behind the external events of Luther's life and the development of his doctrinal positions to the deep inner spirit and emotional life of the great Reformer.



## I

Dr. Tappert's work is the fourth and last volume of Luther's work in the *Library of Christian Classics* now in process of publication by the Westminster Press. Unlike the other three Luther volumes in the series, it is a book for laymen as well as theologians and pastors. Here Luther is not the Bible commentator nor the theologian nor the disputant about the freedom of the will, but the great heart practicing as well as preaching his theology and dealing realistically with all kinds of people in their daily walks of life.

The reader is fairly amazed at the wide range of Luther's practical wisdom and the great variety of people who sought his counsel. Here in these documents we have the busy Reformer in the very act of extending comfort to the sick and dying, the bereaved and despondent, interceding for those in trouble or need, encouraging the persecuted and imprisoned, giving instructions to those who are perplexed or in doubt, giving counsel in questions of marriage and sex, extending help to clergymen facing special problems, and exhorting rulers, cities, and states concerning their practical duties in the sight of God.

Dr. Tappert is Professor of Church History in the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia. He has specialized in Reformation history. In this volume he has selected with fine discrimination from among the 3,000 letters, more or less, that have come down to us from Luther. Some of them have appeared before in English dress, but now they are newly translated. And in spite of its title, this volume is not limited to Luther's letters. His spiritual counsel is gathered also from his prefaces and his table conversations. The text in almost every case rests on the Weimar Edition of Luther's works.

In his preface Dr. Tappert makes it abundantly clear that Luther's spiritual counsel was not simply the application of external techniques but part and parcel of his theology. His approach in counseling was definitely scriptural and theological, and it would be an interesting exercise to compare it with the approach of modern depth psychology. The practical character of Luther's counsel grows out of his theology of the Christian life: "Although the calling of clergymen is held in highest esteem, the medieval distinction between clergy and laity disappears. Laymen as well as clergymen can minister to the spiritual needs of their fellow men, and nowhere is this more evident than in the encouragement of laymen to hear confession and pronounce absolution." (p. 16.)

This volume maintains the high traditions of the previous volumes in the *Library of Christian Classics*. The judicious selection and grouping of materials, the critical handling of the texts, the skillful translations, the careful documenting of all sources and biblical references, the comprehensive bibliography, the instructive general introduction and the meticulous historical introductions to every one of the 201 documents—all help to give special value to this volume. Both the general index and the list of biblical references seem to be complete, and these will be particularly useful because this is the kind of book that one may read selectively and then refer to frequently, the preacher for his sermons, the pastor in his counseling, and the Christian layman in need of good advice on any one of a multitude of practical subjects.

## II

Thiel's big volume is not the work of a Luther-specialist or even a theologian. The author was a professor of biology in a Berlin school. He studied Luther and wrote about him only because a publisher commissioned him to do so, and his grip-

ping biography of the Reformer was the product of his spare hours. But he proceeded in thoroughgoing scientific manner and made an exhaustive study of the ponderous Weimar Edition of Luther's works. His unique interpretation of Luther first appeared in 1937 in two volumes. This excellent English translation was made by Dr. Wiencke, one of the editors of the United Lutheran Church's Board of Parish Education. It carries a preface by Thiel dated 1952.

In his preface Thiel says that his purpose is to select from the countless autobiographical testimonies of Luther the materials that "reveal vividly and fully the growth of a great soul." Thiel is not concerned about the reformer of the churches, the teacher of students, the pastor of souls, the writer of volumes, the builder of schools, but about "an ever-struggling man, continually visited by earthquakes of the soul, a man who experienced massive external conflicts as periods of release and relaxation." Accordingly, much is made of Luther's well-known *Anfechtungen*.

One peculiarity of this biography is the almost complete absence of dates. There is a preliminary "Chronology" which sets forth on three pages thirty-seven dates and events from Luther's birth in 1483 to his death in 1546; after that the reader is not bothered with dates, and the narrative does not pretend to set down events in consecutive order except in a very general way. Perhaps the professor of biology felt that the inmost soul of a great man cannot be dissected by chronology.

The style is impressionistic. There are five "Parts": "Heretic," "Monk," "Warrior," "Leader," "Watchman." Each Part has from eleven to twenty chapters, all of them unnumbered and most of them with single words for their titles. The English translation skillfully transmits the terse, abrupt style that Luther so often used. The total impression is that of a great soul with tremendous energy, almost constantly involved in tempests of the spirit, unrestrained by friend or foe, rushing over obstacles like a foaming stream until it thins out and disappears in a bog of despair. The result is a really gripping and thrilling account—but in the opinion of this reviewer, a one-sided biography. In fact, Thiel himself frankly admits that it would be possible to select materials that would give a very different portrait.

One could wish that in the multitude of quotations from Luther's writings and sayings, references were given to the exact source in each case. In many cases it would be helpful to know the context of the statement. But there is no such help, only the titles of some of Luther's writings in the preliminary chronological table.

The chief problem presented to the serious student by this unique approach to Luther's personality is the problem concerning Luther's spiritual doubts. Are they abiding elements of his spiritual estate and a part of his doctrinal system, or are they only transitory moods of a man who was intensely human? Is it true, as Thiel asserts, that "Luther was eternally uncertain whether he was one of the elect"? Or are the doubts which he expressed and which are here quoted in his own words to be regarded as passing moments that are far outweighed by his own deep ponderous assurance in faith?

In the judgment of this reviewer, Thiel emphasizes unduly Luther's disappointments and vexations in the period after the Peasants' War. He quotes excessively and uncritically from Luther's *Table Talk*. He regards this entire period as a complete retreat from Luther's war on the pope, and a sustained and unhappy assault upon the devil as represented by the antinomians, the fanatics, the sacramentarians, the Anabaptists and others. He had to forfeit his idea of the Church

as the "assembly of earnest Christians" and throw himself into the arms of the secular princes. "He had to experience the age-old contradiction between the ideal and the real, and experience it so deeply and agonizingly as did hardly any other man who sought to make mankind happier." (p. 406.)

When Thiel translates Luther's *Anfechtungen* into theological terms and emphasizes his "quaking conscience, his eternally struggling and eternally uncertain heart," he fails to do justice to Luther's doctrine of Christian assurance, his confident *simul justus et peccator*. It is certainly not correct to make the quality of "abiding uncertainty" the very heart of Luther's faith: "This uncertainty as a spur toward higher, bolder, freer action—this was the living meaning of Luther's faith. It was Master Philip who betrayed evangelical Christendom away from this meaning when he turned faith into a knowing." (p. 396.) The quotations to support this thesis are unconvincing. But if one points out Luther's abiding steadfastness in his faith and ascribes some of his statements to self-contradiction or garrulous old age, Thiel says: "Smaller men see contradictions because they are unable to grasp the whole, . . . because they are so absorbed in little thoughts . . . a great man cannot endure contradictions." With this statement most students of biography will disagree.

Thiel's *Luther* is a unique, interesting, and readable biography and it suggests the need for a deeper study of "the older Luther."

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**The Virgin Mary.** By GIOVANNI MIEGGE. Trans. by Waldo Smith. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1956. 196 pp. \$3.50.

In admirably compact form this book gives us the outline of the whole development of Roman Catholic Marian doctrine through the centuries. The author is Professor of Church History on the Waldensian Faculty of Theology in Rome. The Waldensians are Italian Protestants, a "Reformed Church" which traces its history much further back than Luther, has branches in other lands (notably in South America), and is today a highly intelligent, ecumenically conscious group. As a minority group in Italy, its theologians are naturally especially concerned with developments in the Roman Catholic Church; and Dr. Miegge shows both a fine sympathetic understanding and a clearly thought out Protestant critique. There is among some European Protestants a current of feeling for and understanding of the Catholic veneration of Mary which seems very rare among American Protestants. Dr. Miegge has his share of this, and writes "without any taint of bigotry," in a spirit that has made it possible for Catholic priests in some quarters to receive the book with interest and appreciation.

The translation, which seems admirably smooth and exact, is by Waldo Smith of Queen's Theological College, Kingston, Canada. Dr. John Mackay and the translator both write brief, cogent forewords. Dr. Miegge's own Introduction takes note of the attractiveness of this doctrine, which appeals to the elemental longing of the child in us for the Mother, and to the man's feeling for the Eternal Feminine. In this fascinating symbol, moreover, the Christian qualities of goodness, pity, redeeming and pardoning mercy are enshrined. But the psychological, pietistic approach "through Mary to Jesus," now enjoined by Catholic teaching upon all the faithful, implies that the eternal Gospel of our Savior Jesus Christ can no longer address itself directly to our generation! Catholic theologians frankly admit that the full

Marian teaching is not to be found in the Bible, but only takes its point of departure from there. They appeal to Cardinal Newman's historical conception: "that dogma is a living organism that develops on the lines of its premises and according to its intrinsic dynamic" (p. 20).

Dr. Miegge shows how in the Scriptures and the Apostles' Creed, Mary was simply the *faithful witness* and the *chosen instrument* of the Incarnation—which was already "enough to 'make her blessed' for all time" (p. 35). In the next three centuries, the Church appealed to the fact of her motherhood as a bulwark against the Docetic denial of Christ's humanity—but on the other hand succumbed to the Gnostic and ascetic depreciation of normal sexuality, and built up (first in legend and then in theology) the doctrine of her perpetual physical virginity; virginity in itself was adored in her. In the fifth century, Mary was defined as "the Mother of God," for the theologians' purpose of buttressing the full recognition of Christ's "consubstantiality with the Father." But the way was thus opened for the influence of the matured pagan worship of a supreme "Queen of Heaven"—an influence evidenced in the changing character of Christian art. So the development continued, through "The Assumption," "The Immaculate," "The Compassionate Mother," "The Co-redemptress."

At each stage there was controversy, and there were eminent theologians who resisted each development over against those who advocated it. In earlier centuries the Papacy usually attempted to take a middle line between opposing schools; but in modern times, it has deliberately favored the extreme, more advanced positions. Not only Protestants are unable to accept this system of doctrine; even the Eastern Orthodox churches which accept the older dogmas cannot accept the more recent.

St. Bernard of Clairvaux (twelfth century) is held to be "the real creator of modern Marian devotion" (p. 137). Although he opposed the doctrine of Immaculate Conception (to guard Christ's uniqueness), he exalted Mary as the merciful Mother who could protect frail humanity against a Christ who was already seen too much as the terrible Judge of Michelangelo's painting. Over against Divine majesty and judgment, there had to be the promise of a grace not morally conditioned. Both Luther and the eighteenth-century St. Alfonso Liguori echoed St. Bernard—but Luther rediscovered this free grace in *Christ*, while Alfonso found it in Mary, and urged Catholics to put unlimited trust in her. It was not a far cry from him to the "Marian century" and the present dream of a new "Marian civilization."

Dr. Miegge knows that Protestants should not reject the whole thing *in toto* without giving it a fuller hearing than is usually done. There are humane values enshrined in this devotion. But as a Protestant he discerns clearly that if Marian piety matures along present lines, not Christ but Mary will be the real and indispensable way to God, and the resultant religion will no longer be Christianity.

ERMINIE HUNTRESS LANTERO

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**Personal Experience and the Historic Faith.** By A. VICTOR MURRAY. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1955. 304 pp. \$3.75.

This wise and mature book is as impressive as was the first edition issued in England in 1939; it is now revised and brought up to date. Those who like President Murray's *Education into Religion* will appreciate the insights into history, truth, and experience as he has developed them in this volume. His good literary style is

punctuated with quotable epigrams, and his treatment of persons in relationship to the divine Person is at every point helpful and meaningful for today.

Man is placed in a universe that he seeks to control, so the argument runs, but he finds the rest of the world is different from him and he discovers another world beyond the barriers of this one. He is limited by time and space, yet he has experiences that transcend time and space. Man comes to a realization of God's presence in his life, and he is helped to this perception by the fact that he is finite and limited. The Hebrew tradition makes it clear to him that God works in history. Out of the tragedy that led to Jesus' death comes the illumination of a personal and spiritual world that is given to men through the love of God in Christ. Man experiences a new birth and enters a new way of life. This experience involves both the historical event and the present situation.

The problem of communication turns on the transmission of historical experiences so that they become contemporary. The Christian witness has come down to us in a variety of ways, but all of them point in the end toward worship. "It is in worship that religious feeling has been kept alive, the feeling that with all our wisdom and all our efficiency and all our pride we are infinitely less than He whom we serve, even though His service may be perfect freedom" (p. 175). A careful analysis of the chief aspects of Christian experience follows: feeling, which is at the heart of experience; knowing, which gives content to our history and leads to doctrine (although doctrine may lead to experience); choosing, which represents the prophetic element; doing, which involves both service of others and worship; and belonging, which means being in the society in which the historic witness is maintained. All of these are combined in Christian discipline, for they bring us into the presence of God himself. It is not our being together that matters, but that we come together around God. We do have a vision of God as the historical and the contemporary are brought together in worship and fellowship. "Both personal experience and the historic faith have eternity as their background and the vision of God Himself is their goal" (p. 288).

Gems of wisdom run throughout the book. "Feeling is at the base of all activity if we can get down far enough" (p. 50). "Relations between persons cannot but be a matter of faith, and faith breeds faith" (p. 62). "There is no society in the world wherein it ought to be possible to take so much for granted as in the family" (p. 66). "A taboo is not a prohibition; it is an arrangement whereby one may play with fire and not get burned" (p. 73). "We are 'distant' from an historical fact, not according to the stretch of time that lies between it and us, but according to the measure of its significance" (p. 81). "We are not better than our forefathers unless we are also better than our contemporaries" (p. 82). "Forgiveness is where mercy and justice meet and where it is the sinner who asks for justice and the sinned-against who offers mercy. Only in this way can the old relationship be restored" (p. 124). "Knowledge of God is *saving* knowledge, because it is love and not doctrine" (p. 159). "When people say that a man is a 'real Christian' they are usually not misunderstood, for they mean someone in character like Jesus of Nazareth" (p. 175). "Emotions must die on one level in order to be rekindled at a deeper level" (p. 186). "Infallibility is a position of scepticism—of a disbelief in the validity of the spiritual order so profound that it is willing to accept the things of time and sense as a substitute for it" (p. 216).

One does not argue with a book such as this. At times, President Murray sounds like an old school liberal, and he has learned much from Schleiermacher and



the school of religious experience; but the New Testament faith that leads to a new attitude toward life as found in the worshipping congregation stands at the center of his thought. God is the chief actor in the drama of redemption, and the mystery is that of divine grace rather than of a metaphysical puzzle. "What is often called 'prevenient grace' is really prevenient love" (p. 272).

RANDOLPH CRUMP MILLER

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**Thomas Cranmer, Theologian.** By G. W. BROMILEY. New York: Oxford University Press, 1956. xxviii-108 pp. \$3.25.

Today the traffic in Broad Street, Oxford, passes unheeding between the Lodge of the Master of Balliol and Thornton's bookshop, over a metal cross in the roadway which marks the place where, four hundred years ago, Thomas Cranmer, reforming Archbishop of Canterbury, was burned at the stake. His most enduring memorial is the Book of Common Prayer, which remains substantially as he left it, a splendid combination of the Catholicism of antiquity with the insights of the Reformation. His permanent contribution would seem to lie in the fields of liturgics and ecclesiastical polity rather than in theology, for his genius lay in literary editing and political compromise.

But possibly we do Cranmer an injustice by thinking of Jewel and his renowned pupil, Hooker, as the great apologists, and Whitgift and Bancroft as the chief polemical thinkers of the early Anglican Church. It is the distinction of Dr. Bromiley's scholarly book that he advances Cranmer's claim as a theologian. Dr. Bromiley does not claim that he was a creative thinker, but he shows convincingly that the Archbishop laid the foundations of all subsequent Anglican theology on the threefold basis of Scripture, the Fathers, and reason. He also maintains that Cranmer has many "embryonic" insights, which Bromiley develops with clarity, cogency, and a living receptiveness to Reformed theology today. Such reconstructions are not the least significant part of this well-argued volume, itself a model of concision and illuminating brevities.

The most valuable chapter in the book is entitled "Scripture and Tradition," which shows Cranmer elaborating a theory of the relation of Revelation to the Church which avoids both bibliolatry and the Roman Catholic doctrine of development, and lays the ground for his successors.

Cranmer's formulation of the doctrine of Justification by Grace also has abiding relevance, partly because he will not equate faith with an emotion or a pietistic attitude, partly because he insists that works of grace must be the correlate and consequence of justification by grace. He preserves the objectivity of God's saving act in Jesus Christ with a warm personalization.

His doctrine of the Church bears many of the marks of controversial exigency. Stressing both the invisibility of the Church (since God alone knows who are his elect) and its smallness ("little flock"), as against the vastness of the Roman Catholic community, he does not satisfactorily elaborate the marks by which a genuine church may be distinguished from an apostate one, beyond the general assertion that its main identification is fidelity to the Scriptures through the Holy Spirit. (One compares the superior treatment of Calvin's *Institutes*, IV, ch. 1-2.)

Even his elaborate treatment of the Eucharist is remarkable for its dissent from transubstantiation rather than its positive defense of a better and evangelical alternative which also rejects Zwinglianism. It is a pity that Dr. Bromiley did not acquaint



his readers with the recent controversy of great importance between the late Dom Gregory Dix and Dr. C. C. Richardson on the interpretation of Cranmer's Eucharistic doctrine.

There is considerable contemporary relevance in Cranmer's doctrine of the ministry, since he accepted the three orders on historic and pragmatic grounds. He also maintained that from Scripture alone he could see no distinction between an episcopate and a presbyterate. Few, however, would be found to agree that in a "Christian Commonwealth" ecclesiastical appointments should be made by the State.

Dr. Bromiley is to be congratulated on showing the importance of this pioneering English Reformed theologian, and not least on developing some of the hints that this harassed Archbishop in an uneasy age left to the future.

HORTON DAVIES

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**Surprised by Joy: The Shape of My Early Life.** By C. S. LEWIS. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1956. 238 pp. \$3.50.

Of the generally negative reactions to this splendidly titled book, the comment of Matthews in the *New York Times* is typical: Lewis loses us before the end of the hunt and takes most of the thrill out of joy. My own feeling is that the man simply has too many roles to explain and is confused as to whether an intellectual or an emotional explanation is needed. As a writer of fantasies and literary criticism, Lewis feels bound to tell of his debt to the passionate Welshmen who were his father's forebears, of the rich imaginative at the "New House" near Belfast, of his devotion to Norse mythology, of his reading in all the literatures of the world, of prep school under the brutal "Oldie," of Greek and Logic under "the great Knock." These descriptions constitute the best part of the book, but we miss an account of the flowering of his genius—the release of both creative and critical ability—under the impact of conversion. Lewis fails to tell us how his reading became writing, and he neglects his human love affairs. As a convert from atheism he writes of an utterly unique pilgrimage to faith. Doubtless the basis of his hatred and denial of God—disgust with the wretchedness of life—is a common one. But his account of escape, via Bergson's revelation of the dynamic, pulsating energy of life, is not likely to be of much help in understanding the more normal avenues of conversion. Nor is any minister likely to get very far with Lewis's exposition of necessary creation, or the identity of the Logos of Idealism with the Absolute of Theism, or with Lewis's very slighting remarks about the church.

Actually Lewis has made it quite plain that his book is not autobiography at all, in the normal sense of the term. Nor does it resemble the kind of biographic meditation which Augustine wrote in his *Confessions*. Rather, it is a kind of overly abundant psychological meditation on a highly selective group of facts. We miss Augustine's accounts of the great primary experiences of life—learning to speak, first contact with evil, quiet conversation with the mother; for Lewis's accounts of school and his struggles with his father are far too vivid for a classic's detachment. Nor is the writing so meltingly and tenderly lovely. What we look for in autobiography is a mass of details which we can interpret for ourselves—Rousseau's account of his own childhood and his loves, Newman's careful analysis of the intellectual progress of his faith, Baxter's elaborate analysis of his own times. The writer who interprets too freely his own facts can only be regarded as an interloper.

Actually, what Lewis has given us is not his own autobiography, but the biog-

raphy of an emotion which he "loved long since, and lost awhile." He felt its touch in the security he knew in youth; he lost some of the joy when his mother died, and more at prep school; he sought frantically for it in religious exercises with which he burdened himself; and he lost it completely in the dandyism of adolescence. After the first World War, when God was closing in fast, the desperate young atheist learned from the philosopher Alexander the basic distinction between joy felt and joy analyzed. But his exposition of what for him was a crucial realization is less satisfactory than his description of contacts with this joy—from early days to adulthood. Three experiences he describes with particular vividness—the sight of a flowering currant bush one summer day, which sent his memory back to a design of moss on a biscuit tin (and back even further to Eden), his intense love for Autumn, and the sense of the North (all that was "cold, spacious, severe, pale, and remote") which Longfellow, Wagner, and Arthur Rackham fostered in him. Lewis evidently regards these experiences as crucial touchstones and peremptorily invites the reader, if he finds these things of no interest, to close the book forever.

They are crucial because, like everything else in Lewis, they stand in curious opposition to normal avenues of thought. The picture of Lewis on the book jacket is obviously calculated to suggest whimsicality, clumsiness, puzzlement, incompetence in worldly things. Lewis refers often to his hatred of games and sports, his love of solitude, his admiration for primitive times, his basic indifference to life (only after conversion did I begin "to know what life really is and what I would have lost by missing it"). Lewis's description of the classic English boyhood at public school is likely to mean more to English than to American readers, but the intent is plain enough: the normal, the traditional, the accepted pattern can easily lead to bitterness, cynicism, and atheism. Turn this coin over and the positive value of Lewis's book plainly emerges—a plea for the recognition in an age primarily devoted to science and business, of the place and contribution of the original and unique personality fostered by humanism within the Christian pattern. Indeed, the implications of the book seem almost existentialist, for Lewis is plainly suggesting that every man creates the pattern of his life for himself, through the experiences of life which appeal to the unique depths in him, that there is no general pattern, that every man plays the game of chess with God alone. Our faith, Lewis implies, is rich not because it fosters conformity but because it nourishes infinite variety. Only the Christian, as Chesterton has pointed out, finds life rich enough to desire it eternally.

JAMES ROY KING

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**The Christian Imperative.** By MAX WARREN. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1955. 144 pp. \$3.00.

**The Great Realities.** By SAMUEL H. MILLER. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1955. viii-181 pp. \$2.50.

These two volumes may well be placed together, although they do not deal with the same specific topics. Both are relatively small books from the point of view of quantity of material, but there is nothing small about them from the standpoint of quality of thought and writing.

Max Warren is a British Anglican who is currently General Secretary of the Church Missionary Society. He spent some years in Northern Nigeria under the auspices of this Society, and his missionary interest is reflected all through his book.

The plan of *The Christian Imperative* is clear-cut and simple. There are four main divisions: "Go Preach," "Go Teach," "Go Heal," "Go Baptize"; and there is a final chapter on "The 'How' of Obedience." Canon Warren finds that the Christian Imperative, in its fourfold aspect, is a positive compulsion born of a great discovery. The discovery itself is recorded in the New Testament, but its implications are not confined to the beginnings of the Christian movement. These implications have their application in every age, and not the least in ours.

Canon Warren is concerned to make clear both the implications of the Christian Imperative and their application in the modern situation. He recognizes that we live in a revolutionary world, and also the relevance of the gospel to the tensions and tribulations of our times. The "marching orders" of the Church are set forth in the simple terms he takes for his chapter headings, and he seeks to show the various ways in which the Christian believer can fulfill the fourfold command of our Lord in this troublous modern world. Indeed, our author assays a sound, though brief, reappraisal of the supreme task committed to the Church, in the course of which such time-honored terms as "mission" and "missionary" (together with the adjective "foreign") are set within the new perspective of "this present age."

Canon Warren makes excellent use of his knowledge of New Testament Greek, and of his reading as it bears upon the topics he discusses. In a longer review some critical notes could be added about the wide meaning he gives to the term "Go Heal," and about his treatment of "Go Baptize." These chapters were originally given as the Kellogg Lectures at the Episcopal Theological School, Cambridge, Mass.

It is said that "good wine needs no bush," and those who have read Dr. Miller's former books—*The Life of the Soul* and *The Life of the Church*—will need no laudatory notice to persuade them to invest in *The Great Realities*. Here is a book of the first order, revealing its author as a man of deep spiritual insights and of wide spiritual horizons. He writes with both warmth and light about the supreme things in Christian experience.

Dr. Miller is pastor of Old Cambridge Baptist Church, near the Harvard campus, and he has had much experience lecturing and preaching to students. He has read widely (there are many fresh quotations and illustrations in this book) and thought deeply, and his treatment of the great realities combines prophetic fervor and poetic insight. If, as is said, "the style is the man," then this book by the elevation of its style bears witness to a very fine mind in the man who wrote it.

In addition to the Introduction (which truly introduces the main themes of the book) there are seven chapters. The first deals with Man in his present predicament and the second with God as man's Savior from futility and frustration. Then follow penetrating discussions of "Prayer, the Living Dialogue," "Worship, Belonging to a Church," "Faith, Trying to Believe," "Love, the Greatest Truth," and "Peace, Its Power and Joy." To this reviewer *The Great Realities* is beyond criticism, and deserves all the praise that will undoubtedly be heaped upon it by those who take the time and trouble to read it.

JOHN PITTS

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**The Idea of History in the Ancient Near East.** Edited by ROBERT C. DENTAN.  
New Haven: Yale University Press, 1955. ix-376 pp. \$5.00.

For any persons, laymen or scholars, interested in the widely varied aspects of the study of the ancient Near East, this is an absolutely indispensable volume.

It is a symposium resulting from a series of papers presented in the academic year 1952-53 before Yale's Semitic and Biblical Club, with contributions as follows: Preface by Julian Obermann; "Ancient Egypt," by Ludlow Bull ("destined to be the last essay from his pen, based on the last public lecture he gave at his alma mater"); "Ancient Mesopotamia," by E. A. Speiser; "Ancient Persia," by George G. Cameron; "Ancient Israel," by Millar Burrows; "The Hellenistic Orient," by C. Bradford Welles; "Earliest Christianity," by Erich Dinkler; "Patristic Christianity," by Roland H. Bainton; "Early Islam," by Julian Obermann; "The Twentieth-Century West and the Ancient Near East," by Paul Schubert.

The book is uncommonly successful as symposia go. In most of the chapters, the consciousness of participation in a joint project is explicit or implicit; and the reader feels something of the writers' excitement in a project quite without parallel or precedent. Burrows writes, for example: "... while my predecessors in this series have been breaking virgin soil, my own plot has already been cultivated almost to the point of exhaustion." That may be; but Burrows adds a new and sensitive essay to the study of ancient Israel, an essay further enhanced by the context out of which it came and in which it is presented.

It is impossible for this reviewer to overstate his own enthusiasm for the project. It has, of course, some of the limitations that inhere in all symposia. The aim of the study, stated in the preface, is met with varying degrees of success, of course; and certain particulars stated in the aim appear in one or two of the essays to have been, unhappily, missed altogether. The essay on Egypt, for example, hardly comes to terms at all with "the meaning of the past for those who preserve, modify, or create the early stories . . . the interests and motives (that) are perceptible in the telling and retelling of stories of the past."

But over all, the reader will surely concur in Professor Obermann's words in the preface: "... there can be no question that [here Obermann modestly excepts himself, and his own contribution—an unacceptable exception, since his essay on Islam ranks with the best in the book] each lecture will be found to offer in and by itself a distinct and indeed novel contribution to Near Eastern research."

Let the prospective purchaser also consider the valuable review of all the most recent pertinent literature on history and the Near East presented in footnotes and in selected bibliographies at the end of each of the chapters. When he has purchased the book, he will rejoice in the fact that here is one symposium well indexed—with individual indexes on eight of the nine chapters. One may add, finally, that the technical competence of the Yale Press is on every page a pleasure and satisfaction to the reader.

B. DAVIE NAPIER

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**Christ and His Church.** By ANDERS NYGREN. Trans. by Alan Carlsten. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1956. 125 pp. \$2.50.

Every reader of Anders Nygren's *Agape and Eros* will want to read what the scholarly Bishop of Lund has to say in his recently translated work, *Christ and His Church*. The book consists of lectures, delivered under the Laidlow Lecture-ship established in Knox College, Toronto, in 1953 in honor of the late Mr. Robert Laidlow by his sons; and the translation has been well made by Alan Carlsten, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, Holyoke, Massachusetts. The central theme

is the unity—almost amounting, in Dr. Nygren's opinion, to identity—between the Gospel, Christ, and the Church. As one might expect, the treatment is determined by the author's ecumenical interest, which goes back to the Edinburgh Conference of 1937. He believes that the world-wide endeavor to attain to unity has been hampered by the kind of approach which has been made. The true approach is theological, and is bound up with convictions concerning the indispensable connection between Christ and his Church.

In this persuasion Bishop Nygren compares the place occupied by theology at the turn of the century and that in our own time, and he raises the pointed questions: "Is Christ a Part of the Gospel?" "Is the Church a Part of the Gospel?" He reminds us that Harnack taught that Jesus himself, "unconcerned for all externalities," gave no thought to the question of the Church; and recalls Loisy's epigram, "Jesus proclaimed the Kingdom of God, but it was the Church that came." Today, he reminds us, the inseparable relationship between Christ and the Church is more and more acknowledged, and that, if one compares the situation now with that which existed fifty years ago, "the difference is immense" (p. 30). This claim is supported by a careful study of the Messianic expectations in the days of Jesus, the connection between Messiahship and Kingship, the idea of the Son of Man, the concept of the Suffering Servant of the Lord, and the interest taken in "He who comes." He sees an intimate connection between the new Messianic view of Jesus and the so-called "Messianic secret," which was the secret of Christ himself. "In reality," he says, "Jesus Christ—and Him crucified—stands at the very center of Christianity" (p. 68), and he bases this conviction on a close study of the Baptism of Jesus, the Messianic Temptations, Peter's Confession of the Christ and His predictions of suffering, the Agony in Gethsemane, the last temptation on the Cross, and the triumphant cry, "It is finished."

These submissions, which occupy the greater part of this significant book, will be welcomed by many readers. His further claims are more challenging, especially his claim that there is no Christ without the Church and no Church without Christ. Can we say, for example, that "just as the Church is nothing without Christ, so also Christ is nothing without his Church" (p. 90), or that "the body of Christ is Christ himself" (p. 96)? Perhaps we ought to allow for Bishop Nygren's love of paradox, that much overworked word in modern theology. Certainly, in his discussion of the ecumenical problem one cannot fail to be moved by his plea that we must accustom ourselves to think of the unity of the Church indicatively as well as imperatively, as something that exists and must come to expression. Altogether this is a most stimulating book which ought to be read and pondered by all who look for the fulfillment of Christ's highpriestly prayer.

VINCENT TAYLOR

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## Book Notices

Walter W. Dwyer, M.A., of West Dennis, Massachusetts, a Christian layman, has brought out an enlarged fourth edition of his booklet, *Spiritual Healing in the United States and Great Britain*. This helpful survey has been recommended by Drs. Otis Rice, Cyril Richardson, Paul Johnson, Carroll Wise, and Ralph Sockman. The Rt. Rev. Henry Knox Sherrill calls it "a very valuable collection of information." Part I, "A Short History of Spiritual Healing;" II, "Examples of Healing Procedure, Methodist—Congregational—Episcopal;" III, "Appendix;" IV, "Annotated Bibliography." This booklet is offered *free of charge* to readers of RELIGION IN LIFE, and may be obtained from the author at the above address.

Raymond B. Fosdick has written *John D. Rockefeller, Jr., A Portrait* (Harper, \$6.50). A skillful writer and a close associate for forty-five years, Mr. Fosdick was admirably qualified to undertake this biography, which is the history not only of a man but a period, and is meant to be somewhat parallel to Allan Nevins' volume about the first John D. Mr. Rockefeller, Jr., "studiously prepared for a life devoted to a unique problem: how to use his influence and give away his money in this cause" (the spiritual obligation to use one's wealth for the public good). "Mr. Rockefeller's answers to that problem have to a major degree helped to establish modern patterns of philanthropy in America."

Father Trevor Huddleston's *Naught for Your Comfort* (Doubleday, \$3.75) has been widely and thoroughly reviewed in other media. We shall say here only that it is an unforgettable crusading book, utterly alive with the pain of the submerged South African group to which he ministered for twelve years, and the joy of his warm identification with their difficult but vivid life. He believes that in such a situation Christians must "fight with political weapons," if they are to be loyal to the Incarnation.

Winburn T. Thomas (missionary and ecumenical worker in Japan, China, Indonesia) and Rajah B. Manikam (World Council and I.M.C. leader and Evangelical Lutheran bishop in India) have collaborated on a book, *The Church in Southeast Asia* (Friendship Press, the usual attractive format, \$2.50). "The missionary era has indeed come to an end—but it coincides with, even overlaps, the beginning of the era of the churches." "These young churches in these old lands of Southeast Asia are minority churches set amidst vast numbers of non-Christians, and they therefore face many problems" in an area "vast, complex, explosive."

Harper & Brothers this year have put out *The Twentieth Century Bible Commentary*, edited by G. Henton Davies (Old Testament) and Alan Richardson (New Testament), with Charles Wallis as "American editor;" price \$6.95. This "completely up-to-date, one-volume Bible Commentary," mostly a British work but with American additions, is based partly on the now-out-of-print *Teacher's Commentary*. Contributors include H. H. Rowley, H. Wheeler Robinson, C. H. Dodd, Canon Raven, G. Ernest Wright. There are sixteen full-color maps from the Westminster Bible Atlas. Among the line illustrations, the one of "The Hebrew Universe" particularly pleases this reviewer.

E. H. L.



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